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FIRST THINGS

A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life

Abortion and a Nation at War
The Editors

Two Paths to Black Power
Glenn C. Loury

To Students of Divinity
Philip Turner

A Common Enemy, A Common Cause
John Courtney Murray

Tolerance as Catholic Doctrine
Derek Cross

Opinions and Reviews: Carol Iannone on the Death of Literature
Getting Rid of the Vegetables • Better Than Their Fathers
Midge Decter on Mary McCarthy • John Farrell • George Weigel
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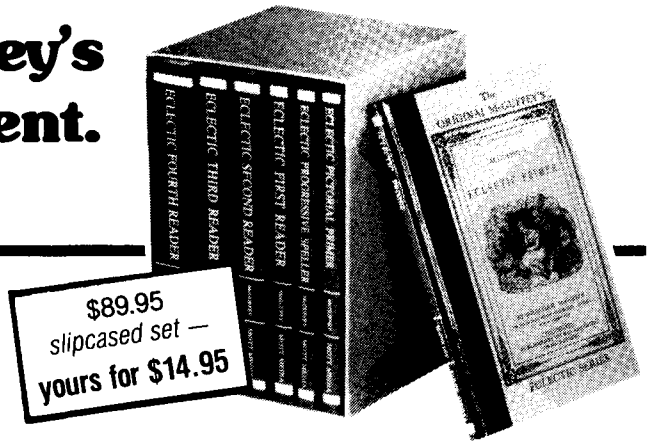

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FIRST THINGS

A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life

OCTOBER 1992 • NUMBER 26

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Thinking About Abortion

The conclusion of James Davison Hunter's article, "What Americans Really Think About Abortion" (June/July), shows clearly why the abortion issue has become for us Americans a "regime question." For in addition to every individual horror that has been authorized by our current abortion law, the reign of *Roe v. Wade* has effected profound collateral damage on the common understanding of the principles fundamental to our democratic republic.

What Hunter aptly calls "the language of 'rights' and 'choice' that resonates most broadly in the public arena," and which is also favored by the proponents of abortion-on-demand, embodies exactly the conception of "rights" and "choice" that is the forbidden fruit of a democratic republic. At once the credo of the anarchist and the authoritarian, this subjectivistic and conventionalist view of "rights" and "freedom" is the dangerous pseudo-doctrine that John Locke countered long ago with the righteous phrases, "Where there is no law there is no freedom," and "Wherever law ends, tyranny begins." This temptation for a moral theory founded on the idea of "natural rights" is, thus, nothing new. Perhaps, however, even more than the challenge posed by slavery, the understanding of the nature of morality at the heart of *Roe v. Wade* threatens the basic coherence of our everyday ethical discourse. . . .

Let us try to recollect a few things that ought to be "self-evident." In the first place, all of our "rights" belong to a *system of moral claims* in which these rights are reciprocally correlated with corresponding sets of *duties*. . . . Second, and as was taught by both Jefferson and Lincoln, "There can be no moral right to do what is morally wrong." . . . Last, the *only things* reasonably and morally left to the vagaries and whims of individual "choice" must *all be things* either positively just, innocent, or at least morally indifferent. . . . Strange as it may seem, the survival of our constitutional order may well depend on the American people understanding (again!) the broader and narrower implications of the need for significantly restricting the so-called "right to abortion."

Gayne Nerney
Murray, KY

James Davison Hunter has clarified the terms of an intensifying but confused debate. He sees hope for the pro-life movement in further discussion on the part of religious groups which, by their nature, can see the larger interest (sacred, social) in protecting fetal life as opposed to individual (the aborting mother's) claims.

One may agree with that, as I do, and still seek a way of more directly persuading an American majority on more centrally political grounds, where secular concerns of a rational and juridical nature also come into play.

If I were drafting [a position paper on abortion] I would appeal to the sense of moderation in the American ethos. Neither extreme: pro-choice or pro-life.

The reasoning is as follows: most folks, like me, see a dilemma as to the human status of the early-term fetus. Aborting it is somewhere *between* murder (clearly a public concern) and the extinction of an insignificant form of life (a private matter). Accordingly, society and government have a moderate, or partial, interest in the act. Just how that interest is spelled out is best left to public and parliamentary debate and vote in the various states. But the overall direction is clear: [we should move toward] a moderate position, detailing the kinds of limitation, patiently worked out in the democratic process, state by state. . . .

Robert Greer Cohn
Emeritus Professor of French
Stanford University

I found Christopher Wolfe's essay "Abortion and Political Compromise" (June/July) valuable and persuasive in a general sense. I too

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oppose abortions except in extreme and rare cases, and I also think that a political compromise on this issue is necessary. But I was certainly struck by Wolfe's statement that abortion is an " 'unconscionable crime' . . . in ways that any person, whatever his or her religion, should be able to see."

This statement is odd in the context of an argument for political compromise, for with the issue of abortion in particular, it is the inability to see how others could rationally disagree with one's own convictions that makes any kind of compromise so difficult to achieve. I hold my convictions about abortion precisely because of my Christian formation. My convictions so formed are therefore not universal principles that any "rational" person will share, "whatever his or her religion." We all gain our intuitions of what is moral, our ethics and convictions, through a complex of traditions, and therefore narratives, that form us. Some traditions, narratives, and religions do not regard abortion as murder. Some traditions, narratives, and religions understand personhood to begin at birth. And some traditions, narratives, and religions offer various understandings about abortion, some of which are in conflict. Christianity is a good example of this latter tradition, narrative, religion.

Wolfe has adopted the Enlightenment's liberal notion of universality as a criterion (perhaps *the* criterion) of what is moral. By accepting this notion, one has bought into the very rationale that provides for "autonomous individuals" to assert their "rights," which is, of course, our culture's premise in providing for abortions.

If we are to achieve a political compromise on abortion so that unborn lives will be saved, we will have to seek to truly understand why others disagree with us about the moral status of abortion. It is blind and unhelpful to think that "any person, whatever his or her religion," should be able to see that abortion is an "unconscionable crime."

Michael Minch
Tucson, AZ

Christopher Wolfe urges the pro-life movement to forget laws that ban all abortion and opt for those that exempt the "hard cases." He assures us that this will "incrementally" lead to a ban on all abortion at some future date, whereas attempting to pass "pure" anti-abortion legislation will lead to all sorts of dire and terrible consequences.

But laws such as Wolfe proposes were on the books of most states in 1973, and they led not to a ban on all abortion but to abortion on demand. . . .

Marie Dietz
North Troy, VT

Both James Hunter and Christopher Wolfe shed some much-needed light on our abortion problem, but they do not offer a great deal of help. It is no doubt informative to be reminded that public opinion is diverse on the subject, and that with such widespread diversity compromise "for the time being" is indicated. But is not compromise for politicians? How can individuals make "moral" compromise without dire consequences? It appears to me that we have a sufficient number of individuals in this country making moral compromises on all manner of subjects without Hunter and Wolfe adding grease to the slippery slope of moral degradation. In many cases compromise only delays the agony (witness Wolfe's reminder of Lincoln's compromise on slavery) and in others unexpected and unanticipated results completely obliterate the good intended. . . . If we now compromise the moral position on abortion can we anticipate a backlash worse than the presumed gain? I wish we knew.

R. A. Hughes
Lake Stevens, WA

I have just finished reading the presentations of Messrs. Hunter and Wolfe on abortion. I continue to be amazed at the polite discourse.

Absent some reasonable scientific evidence that, (1) what resides in the uterus is other than a human being, and, (2) some event takes place in utero which transforms that being from whatever else it is into a human being, it seems to me to be a form of madness to attempt to declare that it is other than a human being.

If that is true, then to kill it is to kill a human being, which may quite reasonably be termed murder. . . .

John G. Gill
Escondido, CA

Getting Natural Law Right

While each of the contributors to your symposium on natural law (May) makes some valuable points, none of them gets the central issues quite right. . . .

Russell Hittinger agrees with Judge Bork that "ideology should have no place in constitutional interpretation," and goes on to treat "activism" as the judicial sin of sins, worrying that natural law ideas might contribute to it. But without a lot more clarification, *ideology* is a cuss-word for other people's political ideas, and *activism* for their attempts to put those ideas into practice. American judges have invoked and acted on larger political ideas from day one, nor could they have done otherwise in view of the way the Constitution is written.

William Bentley Ball tells us that *Wisconsin v. Yoder* was a reflection of the higher, natural law and *Roe v. Wade* of the lower, unnatural law. I agree with Mr. Ball in supporting *Yoder* and opposing *Roe*, but we need a lot more conceptual equipment to draw the distinction persuasively.

Judge Bork never tells us whence arises the obligation of judges to follow original intent rather than natural law. Not from original intent, surely, since that argument would be question-begging. It would also be self-destructive, since the one thing that is clear about the Framers and their constituents is their belief in the "laws of nature and nature's God." . . .

The root of the matter is an unreasonable expectation concerning natural law and other jurisprudential ideas of the same generality. All your writers assume that *natural law* (in Hittinger's case *ideology*) translates quickly and easily into concrete

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judicial decisions, good or bad. But it is always a mistake to regard jurisprudential theories as machines for producing politically correct decisions, whether liberal or conservative (whatever these words mean these days). The role of natural law has rather been to remind conservatives and revolutionaries (and even the archfiend Justice Brennan), as they invoke it to advance their contradictory agendas, of a common humanity that limits conflict without abolishing it.

The contemporary idea of human rights plays the same role: indeed the two ideas are almost indistinguishable, apart from their differing ideological environments. I can say that abortion violates the natural law, or I can say that it violates human rights, but I should hate to be forced to defend one of these propositions while attacking the other.

Philip E. Devine
Providence College
Providence, RI

Kudos to Judge Bork for favoring his interlocutors with as generous a reception as jurisprudence can sponsor. "If logical reasoning is natural law," Bork writes, "I hereby welcome it into the courtroom and wish that it were more frequently found there." A lawyer—I do not want to say, a natural lawyer—could not ask for more.

But what is logical reasoning? The organon of legal logic includes both the law's formal logic and the law's material logic. Legal positivism, however, rejects material logic on the supposition that all logic is formal logic. The natural law tradition, by contrast, accepts both types of logic.

All logic studies consistency. Take *person* as a legal concept. The formal logic of law asks whether the concept *person* is deployed consistently, where the consistency in question resides between *concepts*—between the concept *person* and other concepts or between the concept *person* at time-1 and at time-2. This was Justice Taney's approach in *Dred Scott* and Justice Blackmun's approach in *Roe*.

By contrast, the material logic of law asks whether the concept *person* is used consistently, where the consistency in question resides between the concept and what-it-is that is being conceptualized—a living adult in *Dred Scott*, a developing fetus in *Roe*.

To respond, then, to Judge Bork's reception of natural law as "logical reasoning": Material logic is the logic of recognition. Had logical reasoning qua material-logical reasoning been "welcomed" by the Supreme Court at crucial junctures in its history, no living human body would have gone unrecognized as a person, not Mr. Scott and not the *Roe* fetus. The consistency between the concept *person* and what-it-is it conceptualizes—the consistency between the sign and what it signifies—would have ensured recognition.

I am well aware that Judge Bork finds it "a bit imperialistic to claim the field of logic for natural law." But positive constitutional law, simply because it partakes of the natural law, makes the same claim.

John F. Maguire
Natural Law Jurisprudence Center
Berkeley, CA

It is interesting to see Robert Bork criticized for his lack of regard for natural law. The principal justification for trusting democratic processes (as Bork does) starts with the assumption that natural law exists. It is then perfectly logical to argue that, if universal natural law does indeed exist, the laws enacted by the people are the best approximation of true natural law that we can have at any point in time. The proper remedy to presumed defects in the people's understanding is an appeal to their reason rather than an appeal to a subjectively defined concept of natural law.

Further, when fundamental rights are established through judicial application of natural law rather than legislation, the rights become far less secure. The lack of a specific law declaring the right of the accused to be presumed innocent is a defect in the law, not in Bork's philosophy, as the new "quota bill" will soon demonstrate.

The real question is who should decide what natural law is. To argue that some minority of superior thinkers can be identified and permanently appointed to do our discerning for us is to challenge the whole philosophical foundation of democracy. It is therefore not surprising that Bork's critics refuse to engage him on this central question.

Jim Ober
Baton Rouge, LA

Can it possibly be true, as Judge Bork says, that "the Constitution has nothing to say about abortion"? . . .

Non-expert though I am, I am not ready to [acquiesce] too quickly when I hear Judge Bork tell us that "the suggestion that the fetus has rights" under our Constitution is "incorrect," thereby taking the issue of fetal rights away from the Supreme Court and relegating it to the realm of "moral debate and moral choice by the American people." As a legal layman I ask, can the Supreme Court have any more fundamental issue to decide than to whom the rights of the Constitution—due process or any other—apply? . . .

Would any of us really want the issue of who is protected by the Constitution to be decided by majority vote? What if the majority were to come to consider certain classes of people to be chattel or less than human, and therefore unworthy of protection by the Constitution? . . . Can we conceive of such questions being turned over to the "moral debate" of the American people for settlement?

(The Rev.) Duane Litfin
First Evangelical Church
Memphis, TN

Debating School Choice

Can anything good come out of Berkeley? I'll never ask that again, not after reading "School Choice as Simple Justice" by John E. Coons (April).

(The Rev.) Steve Odom
Palisades Community Church
Washington, D.C.

We would like to commend John Coons for his excellent article. We

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believe, as parents, that choice in the education of our children is clearly an issue of religious liberty and public justice. And, as Baptists, we can share Coons' frustration and puzzlement that this point is somehow neglected by those who should be school choice advocates. . . .

As a persecuted minority for several centuries, Baptists clearly stand out in the historical record as leaders in promoting issues of justice and religious freedom in America. And yet today, on what is (or should be) one of the most important issues facing American families, our impression is that much of the Baptist "leadership" is either strangely indifferent or openly hostile to the idea of educational choice. Indeed, when contemporary Baptist literature does mention the issue, it is often referred to with pejoratives such as "parochiaid," etc. . . .

Richard and Pamela Sperbeck
Madison, VA

John E. Coons' assertions regarding school choice as a matter of "simple justice" could as easily be applied to the matter of how we finance higher education in America. As much or more than at the elementary and secondary level, our mechanisms for the financing of higher education subsidize disproportionately the education of the wealthy while allowing only a small measure of choice for the poor apart from a willingness on the part of the individual to greatly encumber oneself.

On the other hand, the continuing market viability of hundreds of small, independent, and not well-endowed colleges, often church-related, in the face of enormous and growing price disadvantage is relevant. It suggests that Coons' proposal for wider choice in elementary and secondary education would, in fact, cause an enormous blossoming of vibrant alternatives to address the nation's crisis in education. The success of America's independent colleges, given the price differential, demonstrates that there is a more widespread concern among parents and students for quality and appropriate educational experiences than many would have one believe is the case. . . .

William E. Hamm
Forest City, IA

In his eloquent plea for parents' right to choose the school for their children to attend, John E. Coons makes a whopping big assumption: that children necessarily have parents or families to make the choice for them.

In the inner city schools of my city, 60 to 80 percent of the children live with single parents or with no natural parents. The guardians of these children, so far as they exercise any choice at all, choose to keep them in the neighborhood, close to home. By court order, the system provides for majority-to-minority transfers. It would be easy enough for parents or guardians to move their children from these heavily segregated schools to others in more privileged areas. Only a very scanty number of inner-city children are making use of this provision, however, because there is no one, practically speaking, to make the choice for them. A simple system of free parental choice in our schools would leave these children more narrowly segregated and disadvantaged than ever.

I cannot support a system of parental choice until I know that such children as this have advocates who can get them what they need. That is a tall order. It requires a number of adults who know the child's needs and talents, and who will try to persuade the child's guardians to send him to the right school. . . .

William A. Lane
Macon, GA

While agreeing with John Coons regarding choice, I do not agree with all his "operational criteria." Bureaucracies possess an infinite capacity to make a mess of anything with which they become involved. Thus, maintaining the present public school system in any form would be a mistake. Overwhelming evidence indicates that private schools not only out-educate their public counterparts, but do it far less expensively. In my own state, there is a plethora of school districts, some with only one or two schools—the district where I live has three—each with a superintendent and his bureaucratic staff. There is another bureaucratic layer at the regional level with superintendent and staff. A third bureaucratic level exists at the state level. . . .

Until it can be demonstrated that a system freely permitting the coexistence of schools with widely divergent principles (e.g., some practicing an anti-intellectual Protestant fundamentalism, others emphasizing classical liberal arts study, and still others based upon an atheistic, value-free program with a hedonistic bent) will not be detrimental to American society, the prospects for true educational choice will remain dim. This is the primary obstacle to educational choice. As long as proponents of educational choice can be portrayed as sectarians opposed to existing society, the battle cannot be won.

T. Ross Valentine
Plano, IL

John E. Coons replies:
I am greatly cheered by the insights of Steve Odom and the Sperbecks. If Berkeley can be rehabilitated, there surely is hope for the Baptists. In promoting school choice over the last generation I have found Baptist teachers and administrators (private and public) to be ambivalent. To challenge the traditional government monopoly seems to many of them an act of treason. On the other hand they concede that the public schools as presently constituted are agents not only of class, racial, and religious injustice but of simple ignorance. My present sense is that their perception of that disaster is moving them toward choice that includes public schools as one attractive option.

William Hamm's proposal to extend choice to the university level is reminiscent of the GI Bill and is plausible, at least as applied to lower income students. However, since college is not compulsory and confers a substantial economic benefit on the graduate, I wonder whether it should ever be made "free." I think of my own situation. Until now Berkeley

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has had very low tuition. Like every other student, two of my kids were in effect heavily subsidized, even though I could have paid. The subsidy comes in large part from taxes paid by workers and others who don't use the university system. This seems unfair to me. Either the students should pay a fair price as they go, or they should pay later in adult life according to economic capacity and number of years at the university. This is, however, a complicated matter. Indeed, with all the subsidies and the freedom to select one's university, higher education is already to a significant extent a system of choice.

In respect to William Lane's very proper concerns, note first that *very* few children lack a legally responsible adult guardian even in the inner city. And single parents and grandparent guardians are definitely decision-makers. Of course most of them have never had the chance to choose among schools. Because of family poverty their children have been conscripted for the neighborhood school or bused elsewhere. Research shows that those inner-city parents who do manage to choose a school are perfectly clear about what they want. It is also plain that most other parents covet the opportunity to choose and to exercise responsibility just like those few who have been lucky.

Now, if the few inner-city parents who do get to choose do not typically bus their children to public schools in the suburbs, there may be good reasons. The really distinctive choices available may lie in the private sector, but court orders have not included such schools, and the parents can't afford to pay their modest tuition. In these circumstances would full choice worsen the segregation by race? The situation in Kansas City may suggest the answer. There private schools are the only schools that are willing and able to give integrated education—at one-third the costs of the public schools. Over four thousand integrated places go empty, because the judge will not include private schools in the remedy. Nor is Kansas City in any way unique. Imagine what a full-scale scholarship would do for the integration of the children of Washington's all-black system into the public schools of Virginia and Maryland and accessible private schools in and out of the District.

Finally, Ross Valentine has the correct premise about the public school bureaucracy. The conclusion to draw is that in a market these schools either will reform or perish. They should be allowed to try simply because many parents say that they want their children in a school operated by a public entity. If they do want this, they should have it.

Regarding Mr. Valentine's second point, clearly we do need to educate the media and the public to two truths: (1) The public school curriculum is and must remain largely void of interesting moral and political content; it is necessarily biased in favor of noncommitment and thus is as sectarian in its peculiar way as any other curriculum. (2) A market of ideas embodied in freely chosen schools with distinctive curricula is the way to serve the highest values of the free speech guarantee. Maybe we cannot convince our fellow citizens of the truth of these two propositions, but we must try.

Good and Evil

"Naming Good and Evil" by Joyce A. Little (May) should not go unremarked as one of the clearest statements of the Christian sacramental view of reality and its practical working out in the modern age that I have encountered since I began to read C.S. Lewis on the subject nearly twenty years ago.

Although there are many biblical references that obviously take into account and even explicitly state what Dr. Little describes, I have been drawn lately to the description of faith in the "Faith Chapter," Hebrews 11, where St. Paul makes the sacramental view of reality a result of faith: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." (Hebrews 11:3) What could be more illustrative biblically of Dr. Little's argument? . . .

I am a Protestant (Anglican) so my mind turns directly to the scriptural foundations of what Dr. Little so beautifully elucidates. I assure you that does not mean I cannot be drawn into a thorough appreciation of the reality that Dr. Little describes. In fact, I am convinced that it is the only argument that stands up against the modern feminist view.

Marcia B. Petty
Fairfax, VA

Ugly Conservatism

As a charter subscriber to FIRST THINGS, a subscriber to *National Review*, and a conservative Catholic, I was much perturbed by your editorial in the May issue, "The Year that Conservatism Turned Ugly." When I first read the title, I assumed that you were going to decry the name-calling that has taken place among conservatives this past year. Instead, you elected to join in the fray.

The editorial follows upon the letter to *NR*, signed by two editors of *FT* plus eleven other individuals, protesting *NR*'s expressly "tactical" endorsement of Pat Buchanan in the New Hampshire Republican primary (*NR*, 3/16/92). At the end of the editorial, you identify by association such endorsement with the anti-Semitism of the Third Reich, black power agitators, third worldists, Gore Vidal, and Murray Rothbard and his fellow paleos in the John Randolph Society. That is ugly! It is also very surprising coming from the distinguished editors of *FT*, a number of whom I have come to respect and appreciate from reading their books. What happened?

The origins of the problem go back to your editorial in the March issue, "Christians, Jews, and Anti-Semitism." I thought that editorial to be fine as it was, although somewhat vague and excessively worried over an alleged rise of anti-Semitism in America. You define an anti-Semite as "someone who declares that certain vices and character flaws are specifically Jewish, and who would deny to Jews rights and privileges readily accorded to others." That probably is as good as any

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definition previously proposed. You then commence ruminating on "restoring" the taboo against anti-Semitism, on Jews and the secularization of the public square, and then on . . . Israel. With little apparent connection to what was previously discussed, you propose that "to care about Jews and Judaism is to care about Israel . . . to care about Israel is to take care not only that Israel survive but that Israel flourish."

Still, so far, so good. However, what does it mean for Israel to flourish? This would seem to be a matter of prudential judgment. Some of us believe that what presently blocks the flourishing of Israel is that it is losing its moral soul from years of being at war with its neighbors and ruling over a substantial foreign population which it cannot assimilate; that its economy is becoming that of a third world country due to socialist inefficiencies; and that its political constitution prevents decisive majority decision because any government organized by one of the two major parties is hostage to whatever extremist fringe parties are part of the governing coalition. Israel is able to avoid making the hard decisions that must be made for it to survive and flourish by the United States' substantial subsidizing of the status quo in Israel. . . .

Instead of acting as a forum to encourage and increase the dialogue between Christians and Jews on matters of mutual concern, you condemn any and all who do not agree with your collective judgment as to what constitutes caring about Israel, Jews, and Judaism in today's changing circumstances. Of course, you are always free to criticize those with whom you disagree. That is one of the purposes of a public square in a democracy. However, the way you criticize serves only to close off any further dialogue. . . .

Perhaps what happened is that you all have lost control as a result of working under too much stress. That alone can explain your statement that the John Randolph Society and its members will "very likely" be an important factor in the conservative movement in the years ahead. Are you kidding? Only in the sense that David Duke became a national political actor as a result of the attention lavished upon him by the liberal press. Anyone who really believes that collection of wacko academics, Southern agrarians, unrespectables, and misfits is going to be listened to by a substantial number of conservatives throughout America needs to take a long vacation away from Manhattan Island or the Washington Beltway. . . . Get out and see the country, and you will discover that conservatives who do not live in New York or Washington are not all racists, nativists (whatever that may mean), paranoid conspiratorialists, or anti-Semites, as you seem to fear.

Thomas M. Cannon
Evanston, IL

As a Christian, I consider Christian anti-Semitism an oxymoron. That it has existed, and exists, I cannot deny. Anti-Semitism is one of the many heresies and aberrant beliefs that have arisen over the past two millennia, invariably out of ignorance or misinterpretation of holy writ. Anti-Semitism is neither orthodox, nor inherent in the New Testament text. Quite the contrary. . . .

The usual proof texts cited to impute anti-Semitic attitudes are taken out of context from the writings of Paul. Now one might expect him—apostle or not—to have negative attitudes about the Jewish leadership after having been stoned once and flogged to the point of death on five separate occasions for preaching Christ. And he did. But I don't think any fair-minded individual can read Paul's dissertation on the relations between Jew, Christian, and the Covenant in Romans 9-11 without concluding that anti-Semitism is no more acceptable an option to the Christian than cannibalism or ritual prostitution. During much of the Middle Ages, neither laity nor clergy read much of either Testament; their legacy of anti-Semitism tells us more about biblical illiteracy than about orthodox Christian belief. Anti-Semitism is very much the shame of the anti-Semite, but it is neither required nor permitted by New Testament Christianity.

Robin Bernhoft
Everett, WA

Giving Demagoguery A Bad Name

Congratulations to Edward S. Shapiro for his review (June/July) placing Hillel Levine's *Death of an American Jewish Community* into the correct context, which is Levine's own strident and intellectually shoddy public career. In his pseudo-prophetic stance, Levine has given sloganeering demagoguery a bad name. Any rabbi of the area at the time will attest that Roxbury and Dorchester in the early 1960s were already decaying, aging, disintegrating; the grandparents stayed, the children got out. Shapiro is right to insist that Levine has turned into grist for the emotional left the normal, if unhappy, result of social change. If any social engineers bear the shame, they will be found, as Shapiro says, on the left.

Jacob Neusner
University of South Florida

Kooping Out?

Bernard Nathanson may have a way with words and a good vocabulary, but he demonstrates that his understanding of the careful nuance of conservative evangelical Presbyterian thought is woefully wanting in his review "Koop De Grâce" (April). Much worse than this, Nathanson makes himself guilty of the crimes of which he accuses Koop—namely "savaging certain elements of the pro-life movement."

C. Everett Koop's tenure in office may be described in many ways, but saying that Koop has been "turned into swine for his trouble" for his years of distinguished service as our nation's Surgeon-General is unfair and false. Contrary to Nathanson's claims, Koop's coming to the position of the nation's number one doctor was no "lust for a post in the federal department of Health and Human Services" by a "trusting naif" following his "ambitious lights." Rather, Koop was simply responding to a call to serve in the same way

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that he responded to the call of the hungry homeless men at the 12th Street Gospel Hall or the students at the Wayside Gospel Mission. Koop's response to the call should be seen as an honest willingness to serve. It would certainly have been much safer and easier for him to continue on in his distinguished practice and shirk the call to the lion's den of Beltway political life. But Koop is a man of principle and he does not look for the easy or safe way out, and on this score Nathanson has misunderstood Koop's most basic motivations. . . .

Nathanson rather vaguely suggests that Koop failed to acknowledge the "epidemiological truism" that the way to curb AIDS was "the curbing of the behavior in question." Nathanson wisely does not pursue this suggestion any further, as there is little place he could have gone with it. What was Dr. Koop supposed to do, round up the entire homosexual community along with every promiscuous heterosexual and throw them in jail? There is little that can be done from this angle. It was much more realistic to warn the people at risk and recommend abstinence (as did Dr. Koop's letter that went out to every American household) and failing that, let them know that the use of a condom offered some substantial (but not fail-safe) protection. . . .

In many ways Dr. Nathanson's article epitomizes what is wrong with the pro-life movement today. Instead of directing his considerable talents and energies toward the real enemy, Dr. Nathanson has chosen to spend time fighting an internecine battle. He is way off base in his criticism of a sophisticated pro-life activist who happens to have a different (and perhaps more full-orbed and nuanced) worldview. And until the pro-life movement recognizes that there is a serious need for coalition building, the movement will remain fractured, weak, and at less than full strength, while the killing goes on and on.

Douglas E. Fox
Hampton, CT

Bernard Nathanson replies:
I am grateful to Mr. Fox for his insightful comments regarding my recent review of Dr. C. Everett Koop's autobiography (autohagiography?). In response, I should like to set forth these observations:

(a) Far from "savaging certain elements of the pro-life movement" (is Dr. Koop an element, sui generis?), I have attempted only to limn a number of disturbing contradictions and inconsistencies in his account of his watch. If Koop felt an irresistible call to serve, why try to muscle his way into the national spotlight in a gaudy attire more suitable to a Marxist (Groucho, not Karl) opera-bouffe than to a simple soul wanting only to spend his remaining years in the service of the poor and the helpless? Calcutta beckons (Jerry Brown did it); the 12th Street Gospel Hall—as its moral equivalent—is still there, waiting. Or whatever.

(b) If I implied that Dr. Koop has been turned into a swine or into a Beltway Borgia in his Capitol days, I am most heartily sorry. It was a clumsy literary device stemming from the fifteenth episode of Joyce's *Ulysses* (out of Homer) and was not meant to be taken literally. Circe's den (read Washington, D.C. here) was a place of temptation where the less attractive side of humans bloomed (no Joycean pun intended), and a lengthy sojourn in the corridors of power has been known to do remarkably unattractive things to men (and women).

(c) To claim that I would have had Koop jail every homosexual in the U.S. in some misguided effort to curb the AIDS epidemic is a feckless accusation that I categorically reject. Rather than pushing condoms as the panacea for control of the epidemic, Dr. Koop was obliged (my own ipsedixitism) to insist on the (Charles) Krauthammerian ethic: reveal or refrain. HIV is spread from one person to another, and the only acceptable behavior on the part of those infected is to inform the sex partner before the fact—or refrain from the infecting act. Condom advocacy was—and is—an implicit seal of approval not only for homosexual activity, but for all high-risk sexual performance: if you give me a loaded gun, I guess you want me to shoot someone.

(d) Finally, far from spending my time in interminable internecine bickering I have consistently attempted to hold myself above such counterproductive activity. I am no member of any of the multiple factions, dissident splinter groups, powerhouse organizations, or other fissiparous forces in the pro-life movement. But to fail to render an honest opinion in re Koop in the interests of preserving the appearance of unity would be, well, kooping out.

Mr. Fox, to paraphrase a great American (Satchel Paige), go very light on the vices such as carrying on in the politics of pro-life: the political ain't restful.

Poetry Lover

Diane Bonds' "By the Road South of Fairplay, Georgia" (June/July) is one of the most beautiful and touching poems I have ever read. It is best described by an expression common in the South: "It tore me up."

Sam MacDonald
Knox, TN

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FIRST THINGS
OCTOBER 1992

Abortion and a Nation at War

Surely, one may devoutly hope, Justice Scalia exaggerates. In his dissent from *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (joined by Rehnquist, Thomas, and White), he develops the analogy between this case and the infamous *Dred Scott* decision of 1857. What happened then is, in ways ominously parallel, happening now. Claiming to "resolve" a question in passionate dispute, the Court simply takes one side and demands that the nation follow. It did not work then, Scalia argues, and it will not work now.

For years, some of us have been writing about the "culture wars" in which our society is embroiled. We are two nations: one concentrated on rights and laws, the other on rights and wrongs; one radically individualistic and dedicated to the actualized self, the other communal and invoking the common good; one viewing law as the instrument of the will to power and license, the other affirming an objective moral order reflected in a Constitution to which we are obliged; one given to private satisfaction, the other to familial responsibility; one typically secular, the other typically religious; one elitist, the other populist. The strokes are admittedly broad, but the reality is evident enough to anyone who attends to the increasingly ugly rancor that dominates and debases our public life. And, of course, for many Americans the conflicts in the culture wars run through their own hearts.

No other question cuts so close to the heart of the culture wars as the question of abortion. The abortion debate is about more than abortion. It is about the nature of human life and community. It is about whether rights are the product of human assertion or the gift of "Nature and Nature's God." It is about euthanasia, eugenic engineering, and the protection of the radically handicapped. But the abortion debate is most inescapably about abortion. In that debate, the Supreme Court has again, as it did in *Roe,* gambled its authority, and with it our constitutional order, by coming down on one side. There are shadings of difference between *Casey* and *Roe*—e.g., "liberty" replaces "privacy" as the controlling concept—but the end result is the same.

The result is a clear declaration of belligerency on one side of the culture wars. The Court decision endorses the radically individualistic concept of the self-constituted self. It waxes metaphysical in its assertion that the abortion liberty is necessary in order "to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life. Beliefs about these matters could not define the attributes of personhood were they formed under compulsion of the State." (Such philosophical speculation, bear in mind, is by lawyers presumably interpreting the Constitution.) Not only does authentic personhood require freedom from the state, but also freedom from other potentially encumbering community. From spouses, for example. The Court strikes down the requirement that fathers be notified before mothers get an abortion. That, it is said, would be an "undue burden."

Marriage, the Court declares, is only an "association" of individuals entered into for the fulfillment of personal needs. The notion of the unburdened, unencumbered, autonomous self drives the entirety of the Court's opinion. *Casey* continues and expands the philosophical presuppositions of some earlier decisions, as brilliantly described by Gerard V. Bradley in "The Constitution and the Erotic Self" (*FT,* October 1991). In *Casey,* liberty is not the "ordered liberty" of the Founders, nor is it liberty directed to the good and formed by communities of memory and obligation. According to the Court, liberty is, without remainder, the liberty of self-will, self-expression, and indeed self-constitution. For the Court, as for so many Americans, that radically reduced concept of liberty "trumps" every other consideration. Which is why, of course, the slogans of "choice" serve the pro-abortionists so well.

In the otherwise lamentable *Lee v. Weisman* decision handed down only a few days before *Casey,* the Court wisely cautions against the establishment

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of a state-sponsored "civic religion." The same justices seem to be blithely unaware, however, that in *Casey* and other rulings they are in fact asserting and endorsing a philosophy of at least quasi-religious status. Addressing the "concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life" crosses into those "ultimate concerns" by which religion is ordinarily defined. Against alternative understandings of the self in relation to community, normative truth, and even revelation, the Court recognizes no other reality than the isolated individual defining his or her reality.

Thus does it reinforce the Hobbesian idea that we are a society of strangers, perhaps of enemies, and it is the chief business of the state to prevent others from interfering with or obliging the Sovereign Self. The result is the atomistic, and potentially totalitarian, doctrine that society is composed of only two actors, the state and the solitary individual. It is a "civic" religion in the sense of being sponsored by the state, but it is hardly civic in character and consequence. Rather, it is the undoing of the *civitas*, of the "civil society" of myriad persons, associations, and communities of moral tradition interacting within the bond of civility and mutual respect. The construal of the self, of community, and of ultimate meaning that is espoused by the Court is incompatible with Christian and Jewish teaching and, we expect, with the common experience of most Americans. It is, in effect although not in name, another religion.

In expounding the doctrine of the unencumbered self, the joint opinion of Justices Kennedy, O'Connor, and Souter employs conventional feminist rhetoric to argue that abortion on demand is necessary for women to "order their lives." In that view, order presupposes autonomy and, above all, control. This religio-philosophical doctrine of the self and community is not new in the Court's jurisprudence. In the past, however, it has usually been sprinkled through dissenting opinions. What is new in *Casey* is that it is the central argument of a decision supported by a majority of justices. It is a doctrine that grossly insults the women beyond number who believe that their lives are rightly ordered in exercising the responsibilities of marriage and motherhood. The Court assumes that the abortion license has been a critical factor, if not the critical factor, in securing greater dignity for women. It does not even deign to notice the counterarguments: that *Roe* has increased the abuse of women by irresponsible and predatory men; that it has created a huge abortion industry, dominated by men, that exercises a minimum of care in extracting a maximum of profit from the suffering of women.

Protective abortion laws, on the other hand, encourage women to order their lives in ways more positive and secure. For example, during the more than four years that the Minnesota parental notice law was in effect, the teen pregnancy rate dropped by more than 20 percent. In Massachusetts, when a parental consent law was in effect, the teen pregnancy rate fell by 16 percent. That such protective law protects the woman as well as the child is not considered by the Court in its long and rambling disquisition on the need for abortion on demand if women are to "order their lives."

Nor does the Court show any awareness of alternatives to pitting the interests of the woman against the interests of the child. In our society, there is no shortage of policy proposals aimed at providing maximum feasible protection for the unborn, and maximum feasible care and support for pregnant women, mothers, and children. The Court is appropriately concerned for women with crisis pregnancies, but it utterly ignores the possibilities of law and public policy that could help the woman by eliminating the crisis, not the pregnancy. If the Court is to put itself in the business of policy analysis and prescription—a business that is not its constitutional assignment—it might at least acquaint itself with policy alternatives. But it is understandable that such alternatives are not taken into account, for the very consideration of them raises challenges to the dogma of the autonomous and unencumbered self.

The most glaring omission in the Court's decision is the recognition of the other party involved in abortion. The Court recognizes the fetus as "potential human life" in which the state has a legitimate interest (but not a "compelling" interest that could challenge the unfettered right to abortion). Like the *Roe* decision that it affirms, *Casey* suggests that the Court cannot resolve the question of whether the fetus is a human life. It is not, however, a question to be resolved but a fact to be acknowledged. Even the otherwise persuasive dissents by Rehnquist and Scalia (both joined by Thomas and White) fail to get this right. Whether or not the fetus is "a human life," Scalia writes, is a "value judgment" that the Court is not competent to make. Since the American people disagree on this question, he continues, the Constitution mandates that it be addressed through the political process in the several states.

Whether the fetus is a human life is not a value judgment but a biological and medical determination that is beyond dispute. That is to say, no reasonable person denies that it is *life*. Further, possessing as it does an utterly discrete genetic program, it is *a* life. Finally, there is no question that this life is *human*. It follows necessarily that the fetus is a human life. Allowed to develop, it is not going to turn out to be a goldfish. Barring

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natural disaster (as in a miscarriage) or lethal intervention (as in abortion), the fetus will become what every sane person in the world will recognize as a human baby. The fetus is a "potential" many things—a potential rock artist, a potential policeman, a potential criminal, a potential Supreme Court justice. But it is only those things potentially because it already *is* a human life.

The "value judgment" (the more accurate term is moral judgment) enters when we ask what we are going to do about this human life. What, if anything, is owed this human life? What rights, if any, are possessed by this human life? Scalia notes that, up until the peremptory abolition of abortion law by *Roe*, the settled practice of our society was to provide, with few exceptions, legal protection for the fetus. He writes that the text of the Constitution and an interpretation of it that respects its original understanding tell us nothing about what ought to be done with respect to abortion. Therefore, he concludes, in a representative democracy it is a question to be resolved by the people, as best as they are able.

We note as an aside that, if the constitutional tradition includes the Declaration of Independence (as Abraham Lincoln and many others have contended), the argument is significantly affected. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." Since the Founders did not indicate at what point in life people are so endowed by their Creator, one may reasonably argue that they are so endowed at every point along the continuum of life. That having been said, however, the Rehnquist and Scalia dissents are undoubtedly right in saying that the *Roe* and *Casey* decisions take on a surreal quality when they pretend to have "resolved" the abortion dispute without ever having engaged the central question of the dispute.

Let us put it as clearly as possible. There would be no abortion debate, there would be no pro-life or pro-choice movement, were it not for the fact that there are two parties immediately and inescapably involved in the abortion decision, the mother and the child. In the decision to abort, the life of the one party may, in some rare instances, be at stake. The life of the other is always forfeited. Remove the question of the other life, and abortion is a relatively safe procedure for getting rid of an unwanted growth. The entire abortion controversy is occasioned by the perceived fact of the other life. The extraordinary thing about the Court's position is that it claims to settle the debate by eliminating the concern that occasions the debate.

The Court's assertions about the state's interest in "potential" human life are made nugatory by its dismissal of any claims for the legal protection of that life. Americans are painfully confused and divided over the moral status of the life in the womb. But, except for the most radical pro-abortionists, they know that it is not a moral nothing. They know it is a child, or at least a child in the process of becoming, and, although they are not agreed on how it should be done, the great majority believe that it should somehow be protected. They believe strongly that it is wrong that this life can be terminated at any time for any reason.

Media chatter notwithstanding, *Casey* is neither an accommodation of conflicting views in the abortion debate nor a movement of even one inch toward an accommodation. The Court majority is absolutely right when it says that it absolutely affirms "the essential holding of *Roe v. Wade*." O'Connor, Kennedy, and Souter are not the "moderates" finding a middle way between extremes. On the substantive question, their way is the way of Blackmun and Stevens. In an apocalyptic concurring opinion that depicts "two worlds" at war—the children of darkness vs. the children of light—Justice Blackmun, the author of *Roe*, celebrates *Casey* by declaring that once again "the flame has grown bright."

The "essential holding" of *Roe* and of *Casey* is that a woman has an undeniable right to obtain an abortion at any time during the nine months of pregnancy. There may be regulation after the point of "viability," but even then exceptions must be made for reasons of "health"—including psychological health, which can mean emotional distress at being denied an abortion. The pro-life argument is for the maximum possible legal protection of the unborn. And for the protection of women who are pressured into abortion by men—men for whom *Roe* makes it convenient to abdicate their responsibilities. Nobody should fudge the fact that after *Casey*, as before *Casey*, not one unborn child in America is legally protected from being killed by abortion. That is the brute fact that, as demonstrated by every study over the last twenty years, is unacceptable to the overwhelming majority of Americans, and more unacceptable to women than to men. That is the fact reinforced by the Court's "accommodation." (See James Davison Hunter, "Abortion: What Americans Really Think About It," *FT*, June/July.)

Particularly unacceptable to most Americans is the idea that abortion should be used simply as another means of contraception. Yet that is precisely the view that the five justices of the majority move toward endorsing. The joint opinion states that "in some critical respects the abortion decision is of the same character as the decision to use contraception." The opinion invokes the doctrine of "reliance," which means that so many people have

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come to rely on abortion as contraception that it would be excessively disruptive to allow protective laws at this point in our history.

The justices put it this way: "To eliminate the issue of reliance . . . would be simply to refuse to face the fact that for two decades of economic and social developments, people have organized intimate relationships and made choices that define their views of themselves and their places in society, in reliance on the availability of abortion in the event that contraception should fail." More than 40 percent of abortions performed are on women who have had one or more abortions before. The Court's logic is that 1.6 million abortions per year is the price that must be paid in order not to interfere with lifestyles that presuppose the availability of abortion on demand. That is the judgment imposed by judicial fiat on a society in which 75 percent of the people say that abortions should not be allowed for the reasons that 95 percent of abortions are in fact performed. Most in that majority believe that abortion should be available in circumstances of extreme necessity. Again, there is no agreement on what constitutes extreme necessity, but that majority is of one mind in believing that access to abortion should be limited.

It is not true that the Pennsylvania provisions upheld by the Court place some "restrictions" on abortion. They set out some procedures for obtaining abortions, including procedures for minors to obtain abortions without a parent's consent. The Court says that no "undue burden" can be placed on the right to abortion, and any burden that prevents a person from getting an abortion is by definition undue. In their dissents, both Rehnquist and Scalia underscore the double-talk of the decision. Both note that the Court allows restrictions, so long as they do not actually restrict anyone from ready access to abortion. Both observe that the "undue burden" rule will keep the Court in the abortion-deciding business for years to come as it is forced to micromanage every provision adopted by fifty state legislatures. With Thomas and White, they beg their colleagues to abandon the madness of turning the Court into the political cockpit for the endless battle over a great moral question that, according to the Constitution, is rightly to be decided by the people in the political arena.

In one of the most stunning passages of a stunning decision, an imperial Court suggests that, its having chosen sides in the culture wars, the American people are obliged to submit to its decision. "Where, in the performance of its judicial duties, the Court decides a case in such a way as to resolve the sort of intensely divisive controversy reflected in *Roe* . . . its decision has a dimension that the resolution of the normal case does not carry. It is the dimension present whenever the Court's interpretation of the Constitution calls the contending sides of a national controversy to end their national division by accepting a common mandate rooted in the Constitution."

Such judicial hubris clearly and rightly outrages Justice Scalia. The Court majority, he says, has concocted an "Orwellian" decision that rules out the possibility of political compromise on the most agitated question of the day, and then declares it the duty of the American people to accept its "resolution" of the question. The Court says that citizens will be "tested by following" its decision. Suddenly, it is not the Court but the American people who are on trial. Perhaps it is even contempt of court to hold this decision in the contempt that it invites. "It is instructive," writes Scalia, "to compare this Nietzschean vision of us unelected, life-tenured judges—leading a *Volk* who will be 'tested by following,' and whose very 'belief in themselves' is mystically bound up in their 'understanding' of a Court that 'speak[s] before all others for their constitutional ideals'—with the somewhat more modest role envisioned for these lawyers by the Founders."

Mary Ann Glendon of Harvard Law School is *the* authority on abortion law in the Western world. She notes that, of all democratic societies, the U.S. is far and away the most permissive on abortion. In the very week of the *Casey* decision, she observes, the now-united Germany adopted a new abortion law providing significant protections for the unborn. As is the case in every democracy except the U.S., the law was adopted through legislative politics. But the Supreme Court has in effect declared that the American people, once thought to be the teachers of the world in the ways of democracy, are peculiarly unfitted for self-governance.

We have no illusions about the infallibility of the democratic process. But, with the four justices of the minority, we believe it would be the better part of practical wisdom and constitutional order to let the states work through as best they can the impassioned confusions surrounding abortion law. As of this writing, there is a strong push to pass the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA) in a Congress controlled by the Democratic Party. The proposed act would entrench abortion on demand in statutory law. If it passes, it will almost certainly be vetoed by President Bush, and there will not be enough votes to override the veto. The strategy of the pro-abortionists assumes that opposing FOCA will be an electoral liability for politicians. That may be a serious miscalculation. No more than 20 percent of the American people favor abortion on demand. The focus on FOCA would expose the truly radical position of the pro-abortionists, and greatly benefit those politicians who support a democratic resolution of conflicting views on abortion.

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In American politics, the surer ground is usually the middle ground of perceived moderation. The two "extremes" are construed as those calling for abortion on demand and those calling for an absolute prohibition of abortion. In that context, the middle ground is support for the most protective abortion law that is politically and culturally sustainable. Political calculations aside, however, it is obvious that *Roe* and *Casey* have in no way "settled" or "resolved" the abortion conflict. The American people will not, and should not, accept the word of the current five-to-four majority as the definitive word. If President Bush has the chance to make it, the next nomination to the Court will provoke a battle that will turn "Borking" into a synonym for civility. But more important than the makeup of the Court, as Justice Scalia forcefully argues, is the right of the people to deliberate and decide what justice requires regarding "an issue involving life and death, freedom and subjugation."

Abraham Lincoln had *Dred Scott* in mind when he asserted in his First Inaugural Address: "The candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the Government upon vital questions affecting the whole people is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, . . . the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their Government into the hands of that eminent tribunal." As Lincoln would explain to the Stephen Douglases of today, *Casey* is not "the law of the land." It is one wrong decision of the Court affirming an earlier wrong decision of the Court. So long as it stands, it must guide the decisions of other courts, and those in government office must be mindful of that. But the Constitution is the law of the land and, contrary to some judicial "realists," the Constitution is not whatever the Supreme Court says it is. In this land, in this constitutional order, the people, through their representatives, make the laws.

Before and after he became President, Lincoln strove earnestly for the overturn of *Dred Scott*. He failed, and war came. It is almost impossible to imagine that there could be a civil war like the last one. But the destructive effects of anomie and anger are already evident as a result of law divorced from constitutional text, moral argument, and democratic process. The ever-fragile bonds of civility are unravelled as politics becomes, to paraphrase Clausewitz, war pursued by other means. Lawless law is an invitation to lawlessness. The four justices dissenting from *Casey* are not alarmists, but they are raising an alarm. Those who refuse to listen bear responsibility for the consequences. "Against the Court," writes Scalia, "are the twin facts that the American people love democracy and the American people are not fools." They will not forever, they will not for long, be denied democracy and treated like fools.

William Lloyd Garrison and his fellow abolitionists publicly burned the Constitution, believing it to be—as interpreted by the Court—"a covenant with death and an agreement with hell." The Court minority worries about the angry disillusionment of millions of Americans who have been denied their right to make the case in the political arena for protective abortion law. But also the main opinion in *Casey* is filled with ominous worries about the moral legitimacy of the Court and the difficulty of maintaining the rule of law. Indeed, in affirming *Roe*, only two justices (Blackmun and Stevens) are prepared to argue that it was rightly decided law. Kennedy, O'Connor, and Souter say that, right or wrong, precedent must be upheld in order to sustain the perceived legitimacy of the Court. So that they will not appear to be "surrendering to political pressure," they surrender to the political pressure in favor of *Roe*. They are right to be anxious about the moral delegitimation of the Court and the undermining of the rule of law. The course that they have chosen is the surest way to the end that they fear.

Opinion

Getting Rid Of the Vegetables

David F. Forte

The other day, I cleaned out the vegetable bin in my refrigerator. Some leaves of the head lettuce had browned, an old zucchini was wrinkled with age, and a forgotten tomato was shrunken. I had little regret, for I was replacing the space with some fresh sweet corn and a nicely formed Holland pepper.

But some things in our lives cannot be replaced. A while ago, my eighty-year-old mother collapsed and was taken unconscious to the local hospital and placed in the intensive care unit. This very frail woman had suffered a massive subdural hemorrhage and was comatose. The hemorrhage was too extensive for ameliorative surgery. Clinical diagnosis indicated little cerebral activity beyond brain-stem function. After twenty-four hours, the attending physician, whom the family did not know, declared that he had decided to remove her from the respirator "to see how she will do on her own." When the

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family asked whether respiration would be re-administered if her breathing stopped, the attending physician stated that he would not do so, and remained steadfast in his refusal even if the husband and children insisted upon it.

The family could not fathom the physician's motives, for he was not forthcoming about his reasons, nor did he provide much information. Members of the family then actively sought guidance. The family physician, who had treated my mother for many years, received permission to examine her (he was not associated with the hospital). His conclusions, plus those of neurologists whom members of the family were able to contact by telephone, finally gave us a clear picture of mother's clinical condition.

With that knowledge, the family agreed to have her transferred from intensive care, to discontinue respiration, and not to have resuscitative treatment administered should there be cardiac or respiratory arrest. If respiration did cease, we were convinced it would come from her degenerating brain function. However, because of the underlying nutritional weakness of the woman, the family insisted that nutrition and hydration be given. The family physician supported this resolution, telling us that this was the "most humane" course under the circumstances.

The decision was made during the second evening of my mother's hospitalization, and the night attending physician entered the orders. The next day, the respirator was turned off, but my mother continued to breathe sufficiently well on her own. She was transferred to a regular ward. However, the regular attending physician still refused to begin nutrition. There were no indications of any secondary effects (regurgitation, diarrhea, dehydration of the mouth) that could not be dealt with. He simply rejected the family's direction, even though the treatment requested by the family was supported by the family physician and, we were led to believe, by other physicians at the hospital. The nurses attending my mother were placed in an awkward position, caught between the family and other physicians on one side and the attending physician on the other. During the debates and discussions between the family members and the hospital, the word "vegetable" was applied to my mother. It was not a harmless sobriquet.

Whenever we feel the need to free ourselves from the moral command to care for and to treat our weaker brothers and sisters, the easiest way to avoid the command of conscience is to deny the humanity of those dependent on our succor. Whether the precept is formulated as "the just man shall care for the widow and the orphan," or "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," the innate sense of the other person as like ourselves leads to the universal ethical syllogism: we should care for our fellow humans; Antoinette is a human person; therefore, we must care for Antoinette.

We can free ourselves of the moral command by denying the minor premise, i.e., by declaring that Antoinette is not fully a human person, or as the lawyer asked in the New Testament, "But who is my neighbor?" In short, the empathetic bond can be broken only by rejecting the personhood of the other.

One of the most effective ways of stilling the conscience is to place persons who become inconvenient or offensive in a lower biological order. Think of the epithets in our day that have been attached to blacks or Jews as they were a century ago to the Irish and the American Indian. They are often described as less than human, and thus no longer qualify to the status of neighbor, or brother, or sister.

The medically invented phrase, "Persistent Vegetative State," has an inevitably pernicious effect on the way we look at those whose cognitive functions are drastically, and in most cases permanently and terminally, impaired. With the use of this phrase, we affix a label that places them not only outside of the human species but outside of the entire animal realm. It cannot but affect the moral outlook of those—attending physicians and others—who are called upon to treat patients wearing the badge of our disregard.

It is true that the phrase was originally intended to be purely descriptive, denoting that only the "vegetative," as opposed to the cognitive, functions of the brain were still operating. But the term is frequently and widely used for moral effect, no matter what its original clinical provenance. In the nineteenth century, the discussion of the "survival of the fittest" transformed the notion of "fitness" from an organism's attributes in relation to its environment to the inapposite conclusion that humans who could not thrive in the industrialized economy had no moral claim to survival. Today, physicians and others who employ the word "vegetable" in describing the condition of comatose patients and in "counseling" troubled relatives fall into the same moral error.

There ought to be a more accurate term that describes not just the medical condition but the underlying humanity of the afflicted person. Perhaps something like "Persistent Nonconscious Condition" would be a more technically descriptive and less morally freighted substitute. It would, in fact, communicate a more complete picture of what is going on.

Think for a moment what "Persistent Nonconscious Condition" would imply. The condition of the patient is persistent: it resists medical interventions designed to reverse it. But the condition is nonconscious, not "vegetative." We can

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thus say that the cognitive functions of the brain are no longer functioning without implying any disdain for the person suffering from the condition. Finally, the patient has a "condition." She has not been metamorphosed into another "state" of being. She remains fully human, albeit deeply impaired.

Changing the terminology does not necessarily mean that the appropriate medical treatment for those with a persistive nonconscious condition will be any different. Such a change might not, for example, affect the ethical or legal conditions necessary for the withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment. But it would help to assure that we continue to regard these very ill persons as persons, entitled to care, comfort, and whatever treatment is appropriate.

What happened to my mother? After the intervention of other staff physicians, the attending physician at last agreed to offer her artificial nutrition and hydration. Over the next few days, her condition marginally but noticeably improved. Her breathing and heart rate remained steady. Kidney function was undiminished. No side-effects from the administration of nutrition were encountered. Members of the family arrived to talk to her, sing to her, comb her hair. Pupil response improved slightly. Her right arm was no longer flaccid and she seemed to squeeze one's hand in response to questions. A priest who came to see her alone said that she reached for his hand when he approached the bed.

We shall never know to what extent these reactions were genuine responses or our own subjective transferences. Nor shall we know whether or not it was the nutrition that provided the family with time to begin the process of letting go. It did provide us the opportunity to determine that while death would not be opposed, in the interim we would care for mother as best we could.

Antoinette died seven days after the hemorrhage. The bleeding had never stopped. Her lungs had begun to fill with fluid. But when she died, she died as a person and we grieved for her as a person.

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Better Than Their Fathers

Russell E. Saltzman

My fourteen-year-old son has decided he is of the wrong race, culturally at any rate. He wants to be black—or is it now African-American? Well, whichever it is, that is what he wants to be.

As you might imagine, this is quite a change for a skinny blond kid with a German surname. I read *Black Like Me* back in the 1960s. The book's white author dyed his skin black and traveled through the Jim Crow South reporting his experiences, so I know a little about transformations of this sort. But the cultural evolution my son is undergoing is way beyond my comprehension. He has not yet dyed his skin. But I think it is only a matter of time.

I first became aware of his cultural odyssey when he begged me for a haircut with racing stripes, swirls, and his initials. Me, I am pretty much your buttoned-down type of white guy. The haircuts I am familiar with do not include patches trimmed in idiosyncratic patterns. Nonetheless, I do understand the need for individuality among the young, so I consented. Hair, I reasoned, does have the virtue of growing out. He wanted five stripes, I did not want any, and we compromised at three with no swirls, no initials.

Then came the tight-rolled jeans. This entails an elaborate, time-consuming process rolling up jean cuffs tightly against the ankles, urban warrior-style. Actually, I think it is a style mostly designed to consume precious moments every morning—jeans must be rolled just so and if not, start over, and over and over and over and over. This panics me into wondering if the kid ever will get ready for school on time. Can anybody tell me what possible difference there is between a perfectly or imperfectly tight-rolled cuff?

Next thing I knew, we needed $100 Nikes, Malcolm sunglasses, a Chicago Bulls cap, and an oversized shirt with nothing, but nothing, in the pocket. I tried to slip his ink pen into his pocket the other morning and thereby inadvertently committed an act of rank idiocy. "Homey" is the look he is after, as in "somebody like 'us'." Put a pen in the pocket and the kid might end up looking more or less like, well, one of "them." Meaning me, I guess. But okay. At least these are clothes to which I can still relate.

School officials, though, confiscated the cap. Rival hats create problems among rival students, the vice principal told me when I answered the

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summons my kid brought home. The wrong cap can occasion a cafeteria food fight or a hallway ambush, or worse. Now, along with knives, drugs, and guns, caps with team logos are banned from Brentwood Middle School.

So there he is, sans cap, dressed out homey and all and voilà! a white kid who looks for all the world like an urban black ready to burst into rap.

Which reminds me of the lyrics my son has memorized, rapping them out precisely at moments likely to irritate me most. He has memorized only a few, he tells me. I swear, it is six hundred or more by my count. To my mind—white, male, linear and all—the suggestion that rap is actually composed of anything similar to lyrics is like George Bush telling us he has a vision. Still, I listen to it. Trying to stay in touch with my son means tolerating MTV rap every once in a while. I have not as yet surrendered to his demand to convert my car into a mobile 10,000-watt stereo system, but for his sake I am trying to develop an appreciation for rap. To which I can now say: Jesus may have suffered forty days in the wilderness, but he never had to listen to rap. If the Devil had tried that on Him, we would all still be in our sins, I am sure.

The stuff actually hurts my joints, especially my trick knee. Besides, I comprehend only every sixth word, and that only when I listen real hard. My son naturally attributes my limited comprehension to incipient senility. This, mind you, from a kid who mumbles. When he was two-and-a-half, he spoke multi-syllabic words and used complete sentences, but no more. When I ask him to repeat himself, he tells me I am going deaf. But I am not to worry about it, he says soothingly. Being a few months over forty-five and therefore a candidate for Alzheimer's, I could not possibly remember what he said even if I could hear it the first time.

Part of my son's cultural fetish includes watching black television shows--*In Living Color, Roc, The Fresh Prince of Bel Air, Soul Train.* He never got to *Cosby,* though. None of the black kids he knows happen to live like that, well-to-do with intact families. At least one of his friends comes from the projects. Alright, scratch *Cosby.* Does my son know any black kids who live like the *Fresh Prince*? This is my inquiry. No. But the *Prince* has "good lip."

My son has not entirely rejected his white culture, so we also watch *90210,* those Beverly Hills smart alec white kids who pout so prettily when the Porsche will not start. If any blacks go to school at *90210,* I will eat my L.A. Rams cap. *90210* is the sort of neighborhood *Roc* goes through searching trash cans for discarded VCRs. And we watch, yuck, *Doogie Howser,* which ought to be subtitled "How A Prepubescent Doctor Loses His Cherry." Gee, but I hate that show. I hope Doogie is slapped with a malpractice suit. I hope his parents ground him, take away his telephone, smash his computer, and crash his disks. I hope he gets an STD. I hope that Vinnie character, a wise-mouth Italian, shows up in the tabloids linked to the Mob. I hope the damn thing is canceled. Give me Homey the Clown from *Living Color* any time. His humor is obnoxious, but it is at least age-specific.

My fourteen-year-old, to get back to the black thing, has not cracked a school book in my presence all year. Nonetheless, he devoured a 400-plus-page biography of Malcolm X, a $25 "I-gotta-have-it-right-now-or-you-don't-love-me" book. Was this for English or Social Studies, I asked hopefully. No, it's simply that during most episodes of *Roc* one of the characters pays homage to Malcolm, and my son wanted to know about the great man. Malcolm, my son tells me, was a pretty nice fellow who just had a streak of bad press.

This is not what I remember. I remember Malcolm scaring the bejesus out of white people like me. Seeing him reduced to a sitcom laugh line is not in the least reassuring. Recalling the measured, emphasized way Malcolm said "by any means necessary" still sends a little chill up my spine. Show me a thin black guy with a goatee, white shirt, black tie, and dark-rimmed glasses—like that fellow next to me at the traffic light this afternoon—and my guts still turn into warm jelly. I'll have to read the book.

And then there is the necklace the boy wears. A friend made it, he said. That's nice, I said. Pretty, too, with tube beads, red, green, black, repeated in sequence. Do the colors mean anything, he asked me. Not that I could see immediately. He raised his fist and shouted "Free Mandela!" Mandela, I reasonably pointed out, was freed three years ago. Then it hits me. These are the African nationalist colors, sported by a skinny white kid who now, I suppose, has ambitions to become a Third World liberator. Next it will be Winnie.

There is a part of me that says skinny white kids attending schools better than 75 percent black, as my son's is, had better find some protective camouflage if they expect to avoid hassles during the school year. Simple day-to-day survival plays a part not to be underrated in my son's Afrocentric conversion.

But that seems far too simple. There is something more, and I see it, too, among his friends who are black, as more than half of his friends seem to be.

I really do not think my son, or his non-white friends, care if someone is white or black. The difference, for all I can tell, makes no difference.

I am interested in color, perversely now that I think about it. But he is not. He mentions the name of a friend I have not heard of before, David, and I want to know if the child is white or black.

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I bite my tongue immediately; it isn't anything I actually ask. It would be like putting an ink pen in my shirt pocket. What difference, black or white, does it make, I ask myself. None, really. No matter. I want to know if there is a black or a white face attached to the name. To my son, though, the name belongs to a kid he knows and likes and that is all.

And I keep asking myself a disturbing question. Why do I want to know whether a kid's name comes attached with a black or white face? And how come my son does not?

I cannot say, will not say, that I was ever overtly prejudiced. There have been blacks I have known and liked. You might even say we were friends. But they were always black and I was always white. We somehow never managed to skip over race. It was always there between us.

I knew black kids when I was growing up in Kansas. In a high school class of 203 students, all of 12 of them were black. They stood out in a socially submerged way, even if they did not fit in.

My Scout troop was integrated. In fact it was the first integrated troop in my home town, no small accomplishment back then. The feeling I remember, though, was a patronizing one: Big white Boy Scout leader throws arm around scrawny little black kid and tries to teach him how to be white. I had just finished *Black Like Me*, so perhaps it was an understandable feeling.

In 1968, while attending college in a little backwater Missouri town where the local rednecks clearly frowned on integrated colleges, I did briefly date a Georgia black girl. That year the local Republicans hoisted a banner over their headquarters proclaiming "Dixieland is Nixon Land"—which tells you something about the community. Shortly after we started dating, Chantel had a visit from a couple of representatives of the campus Black Student Union, a sure way of killing an interracial romance, and that was the end of that. Besides, it was so long ago—twenty-four years—I can barely remember it, what with me being an Alzheimer's candidate and all.

One of my college roommates was black and my size with a coincident taste in clothing, so we got on fairly well. His kinky black hair left in the sink bothered me, though. My straight brown hair left in the same place equally would set him off. It threatened to become a real racial thing between us. We finally worked it out by cleaning the sink.

My best man was black. I once served on a municipal civil rights board. I served a racially mixed parish in Detroit.

I have not lived a racially exclusivist life, then, but not all my racial encounters have been benign. Once in Washington, D.C., three blocks from the Capitol building, I was mugged by a black man. Last summer in Kansas City, my seventy-one-year-old uncle was shot to death by a fifteen-year-old black kid.

Where I live now in South Carolina, the neighbors next door are black. My neighbor keeps his grass cut, nags his kid as I nag mine, and has never tried to mug me or shoot one of my relatives. He has never been in my house, either, nor I in his. We chat over the fence. We are friendly, but we are not friends.

I think about all this and I contrast my experiences with my son's. I have not had the experience of black friends who are first friends and another color only incidentally, friends that come knocking on the door asking my son to come shoot baskets, stay for dinner, do an overnight. My son is resolutely, genuinely color blind with his friends, and from all I can gather, his friends are the same with him, a case of like finding like. Homeys.

This does not describe every white or black kid at my son's school. Racial incidents at the school this year have sadly increased over last year. But it does describe my son and his friends.

I still do not know what this might mean. But I am intrigued by it, and made hopeful for it. Like fathers everywhere, I hope my children do better than I. And here I can see my son and his friends are clearly better men than their fathers.

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Two Paths to Black Power

Glenn C. Loury

The process of nominating and confirming Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court served to underline the debate about public philosophy ongoing among black Americans. The fact is that Thomas, a black of humble origins and an avowed conservative, met with vehement opposition from much of the black leadership, as well as from other quarters. The racial aspect of the appointment—that Thomas has replaced on the Court the only other black ever to serve there—is of crucial importance to understanding the vehemence of some of the opposition. Indeed, the entire affair illustrates how powerfully two separate levels of deliberation about racial matters—that of the American polity as a whole and that of blacks by and among themselves—can interact with each other, on both sides of the political divide. The attack on Thomas from the white liberal community would have been crippled from the start without a sufficient measure of black authorization. And his nomination would surely have been defeated absent massive support for him among southern blacks, which authorized certain key votes cast on his behalf by Democratic Senators.

The replacement of Thurgood Marshall by Clarence Thomas may well prove to be an event of enormous significance for race relations in our nation—only time will tell. What is already clear is that the debate Thomas' nomination set off among blacks has taken on historic proportion. It is a debate pitting advocates of the liberal civil rights approach, for decades now the established orthodoxy among respectable exponents of black opinion, against advocates of a philosophy for black American advancement based on direct empowerment of the poor, relying significantly on self-help, and dubious about the ability of government programs to resolve the deepest problems of the black poor.

The conflict between Thomas' black supporters and his critics recalls the epochal struggle among blacks that raged at the turn of the century between the followers, respectively, of Booker T. Washington and of W. E. B. DuBois. Washington was a conservative advocate of a philosophy of self-help; DuBois was a radical exponent of a strategy of protest and agitation for reform. While he lived, Washington's view was the orthodoxy. He spent a considerable amount of energy seeing to it that this was the case, including using his enormous influence among whites to cut his critics off from sources of financial support. Nevertheless, in the end it was the ideas of the DuBois camp that prevailed. These ideas led to the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and provided the impetus for the decades-long legal struggle that culminated in the *Brown* decision.

Though it would no doubt be an oversimplification, one can see Justices Clarence Thomas and Thurgood Marshall as direct intellectual descendants of these two great black protagonists of nearly a century ago. Of course, the DuBois-Marshall view is today's orthodoxy, defended fiercely by the civil rights establishment from the criticism of radical dissidents like Thomas, just as Washington once defended his orthodoxy, and by similar methods. But there are signs that a new era is dawning, and that, in the contemporary struggle over the ideas that will inform efforts to improve the black condition into the twenty-first century, the principles laid down by Booker T. Washington will be rediscovered and play a significant role.

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What, then, are those principles? Fundamentally, they constitute an understanding about how blacks should respond to the great philosophical and political problems created by our history of degradation, more recently followed by our unequal citizenship. Translated into program, what Washington wanted to see was blacks concentrating in the main on developing their capacities to exploit such opportunity as already lay at hand, relying on the expectation that as such self-development proceeded, blacks would be in a stronger position to make a successful claim for the full rights of citizenship. He saw two factors that prevented blacks from enjoying our rightful status in American society: there were the actual defects of character manifested in patterns of behavior and ways of living that were observable among the black masses, and there were the racist attitudes of whites. He believed that blacks had both an opportunity and a duty to address the former difficulty; and that in so doing, we would go a long way toward overcoming the latter. He preached a litany of self-improvement. He emphasized Protestant virtues of thrift, industry, cleanliness, chastity, and orderliness. He urged that above all else we blacks must make ourselves *useful*—to our families, our neighbors, and our fellow citizens. All of this may sound quaint today, but at the time Washington's focus on self-help was not particularly controversial. What did stir opposition to him, however, was his rejection of mass political agitation. He thought the active pursuit of civil rights to be premature and dangerous. "Brains, property, and character for the Negro will settle the question of civil rights," he said. "The best course to pursue in regard to the civil rights [cause] in the South is to let it alone; let it alone and it will settle itself. . . . It is the duty of the Negro to deport himself modestly in regard to political claims, depending upon the slow but sure influences that proceed from the possession of property, intelligence, and high character for the full recognition of his political rights." Surely, said his opponents, this was madness, nothing less than an unmanly acquiescence by blacks in their own oppression. And it invited the delighted contempt of whites whose lives were made so much easier for being "let off the hook."

Writing from Boston in 1901, William Monroe Trotter, the first black elected to Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard, denounced Washington as a traitor to the race, and called for "a black Patrick Henry" to arise who would "save his people from the stigma of cowardice . . . rouse them from their lethargy . . . and inspire [them] with the spirit of those immortal words: 'Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death.' " Two years later Trotter got his wish. In his now-famous essay "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others," DuBois wrote:

> On the whole the distinct impression left by Mr. Washington's propaganda is, first, that the South is justified in its present attitude toward the Negro because of the Negro's degradation; secondly, that the prime cause of the Negro's failure to rise more quickly is his wrong education in the past; and, thirdly, that his future rise depends primarily on his own efforts. Each of these propositions is a dangerous half-truth. The supplementary truths must never be lost sight of: first, slavery and race-prejudice are potent if not sufficient causes of the Negro's position; second, industrial and common-school training were necessarily slow in planting because they had to await the black teachers trained by higher institutions . . . and, third, while it is a great truth to say that the Negro must strive and strive mightily to help himself, it is equally true that unless his striving be not simply seconded, but rather aroused and encouraged, by the initiative of the richer and wiser environing group, he cannot hope for a great success.
>
> In his failure to realize and impress this last point, Mr. Washington is especially to be criticized. His doctrine has tended to make the whites, North and South, shift the burden of the Negro problem to the Negro's shoulders and stand aside as critical and rather pessimistic spectators; when in fact the burden belongs to the nation, and the hands of none of us are clean if we bend not our energies to righting these great wrongs.

It is not difficult to find the contemporary relevance in this classic dispute of black American political thought. To be sure, Washington's was a different time from our own. The quality of black citizenship is now dramatically improved, due largely to the efforts of advocates working in the tradition of the NAACP. Moreover, given the political and economic forces that combined to limit economic development throughout the South in the first half of this century, and that ultimately encouraged massive migrations of blacks out of the region, one may doubt that Washington's strategy would have "worked," in the sense of negating the effects of these structural factors, even had it been assiduously followed.

Thus it cannot be said that history has proven Booker T. Washington to have been right, and W. E. B. DuBois to have been wrong. Yet given the way the history of American blacks has evolved, it has to be seen that the animating *spirit* of Mr. Washington's philosophy now offers a sounder guide to the future for blacks than that reflected in the worldview of his critics.

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Herbert Storing pointed toward this conclusion when, in 1963, he offered a defense of Washington's position:

> Yet when the harsh words have been said, when the blame is assigned, when many rights have been granted and are actually enjoyed, Washington's soft, tough words still speak. Opportunities are limited. How well have we used those that are open? Rights are still curtailed. Have we prepared to exercise those we have? The Negro is blamed for too much of American crime. Are we nevertheless responsible for too much of it? . . . The Negro can find deficiencies . . . in every phase of American life, but his own deficiencies are not one whit removed by pointing out those of others. The Negro can serve himself, as he can serve his country, only by learning and thereby teaching the lesson that Theodore Roosevelt said was "more essential than any other for this country to learn, . . . that the enjoyment of rights should be made conditional upon the performance of duty."

These are harsh, unpalatable words to the modern political ear, carefully attuned as it is to the possibility of giving offense. Such words were politically incorrect even thirty years ago. Still, without raising any question of the "fitness" of blacks for citizenship, it is fair to ask now about opportunities unexploited, about rights unexercised, about whether we are too much responsible for what ails our urban centers, about duty and obligation. It is fair to inquire, with the many cries for "Freedom Now!" ringing out from angry, defiant protestors on behalf of racial justice across the land, whether we have a clear conception of what this "freedom thing" really is, of what being free and responsible participants in this democratic polity actually requires of us. It is, I think, necessary to question what it takes for one to stand truly equal among one's fellows; to explore the limits of a rights-oriented approach to the problem of inequality between racially distinct populations in our contemporary national life; to deal with issues of dignity, shame, personal responsibility, character and values, deservingness.

The necessity of raising such questions is clear from the tenor of our contemporary national (non)discourse on race. As everyone knows, there is a tremendous cultural struggle going on in national politics, manifested in disputes over abortion, capital punishment, gun control, crime, welfare, affirmative action, gay rights, school prayer, and other kindred things, many of which have a subtle racial dimension. This cultural tension is believed to exert a profound influence on presidential politics, to account for the severe disadvantage of the Democratic party in national elections in the South and West and among white voters, and to be implicated in the reaction of ethnic working class voters in the cities against racially progressive policies like housing integration, busing, quotas in municipal employment and contracting, and the like.

It is time, then, to recognize that further progress toward the attainment of equality for black Americans, broadly and correctly understood, depends most crucially on the acknowledgment and rectification of the dysfunctional behaviors that plague black communities, and that so offend and threaten others. Recognize this, and much else will follow. It is more important to address this matter effectively than it is to agitate for additional rights. Indeed, success in such agitation has become contingent upon effective reform efforts mounted from within the black community.

Concern for "further progress" for black Americans should not focus in the first instance on passage of another civil rights bill. Such a bill may or may not be necessary, but it is beyond doubt that its passage will not significantly alter the quality of life, or equality of standing, of those blacks whose condition bespeaks that fundamental and age-old crisis for the American polity, namely, the incompleteness of the process of incorporating many descendants of African slaves into the estate of full and equal American citizenship. The progress that must now be sought is that of achieving respect, the equality of standing in the eyes of one's political peers, of worthiness as subjects of national concern. Such progress will without doubt require public action as well as self-help. Health care for the poor, education in the inner city, job training for welfare mothers, discipline for criminally offending youths, improvement of community infrastructure and housing, nutrition for infants, drug treatment for recovering addicts—all of these things and more require the provision of public funds and are essential to the progress we seek. But one's ability to persuade one's fellow citizens to tax themselves in order to provide the services needed depends upon how "deserving" the beneficiaries are perceived to be. This in turn depends upon how they comport themselves. And such comportment is not a matter that public policy alone can effectively address.

The point on which Booker T. Washington was clear, and his critics seemed not to be, is that progress of the kind described above must be earned, it cannot be demanded. He understood that when the effect of past oppression has been to leave people in a diminished state, the attainment of true equality with their former oppressor cannot much depend on his generosity but must ultimately derive from an elevation of their selves above the state of

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diminishment. It is of no moment that historic wrongs may have caused current deprivation, for justice is not the issue here. The issues are dignity, respect, and self-respect—all of which are preconditions for true equality between any peoples. The classic interplay between the aggrieved black and the guilty white, in which the former demands and the latter conveys a recognition of the historic injustice, is not an exchange among equals. Neither, one suspects, is it a stable exchange. Eventually it may shade into something else, something less noble—into patronage, into a situation where the guilty one comes to have contempt for the claimant, and the claimant comes to feel shame, and its natural accompaniment, rage, at his impotence.

As Booker T. Washington argued:

> It is a mistake to assume that the Negro, who had been a slave for two hundred and fifty years, gained his freedom by the signing, on a certain date, of a certain paper by the President of the United States. It is a mistake to assume that one man can, in any true sense, give freedom to another. Freedom, in the larger and higher sense, every man must gain for himself.

This is neither an "unmanly" nor an "acquiescent" nor a "race traitorous" sentiment. Quite the contrary, this is the candid exhortation of a leader who has understood a hard truth about the condition of his people, i.e., that to be able to look their emancipator squarely in the eye, they must first raise themselves from their current level. Nor is it the rhetoric of an apologist for the crimes of others, but rather the unapologetic embrace of responsibility for one's own freedom. Consider the fact that, unlike DuBois and his followers, Washington lived out his life in the South, among the poor blacks of his time. Moreover, he built from nothing, and in the midst of white reactionaries, a permanent, lasting institution which, to this day, helps to meet the needs and expand the opportunities of his people.

Nor is Washington's sentiment anachronistic—appropriate for the second generation after slavery but irrelevant today. For the basic thrust of today's civil rights posture looks to the "signing, on a certain date, of a certain paper by the President," or by a federal judge, to deliver freedom to blacks. That is, rights advocates avoid the necessary hard work of facilitating reform within their own community, reform aimed at reversing the destructive effect of past violations of rights. They seek to lay responsibility for the hard realities of contemporary ghetto life on the shoulders of whites, citing the fact that whites have not treated blacks as justice would require. They argue as DuBois did: "If they accuse Negro women of lewdness and Negro men of monstrous crime, what are they doing but advertising to the world the shameless lewdness of those Southern men who brought millions of mulattos into the world? . . . Suppose today Negroes do steal; who was it that for centuries made stealing a virtue by stealing their labor?" But this argument concedes far too much in the way of black *dignity* for the sake of being able to demand *sympathy.* Can we really expect whites to agree that black "lewdness" or criminality is no more than the consequence of white depravity—that is, conditions for which whites, not blacks, are ultimately responsible?

Do we really believe it ourselves?

Today's civil rights orthodoxy is to denounce as "racist" ordinary people's revulsion at behaviors among blacks that offend and threaten them, as well as policies such as affirmative action that strike them as basically unfair. If whites express fear of crime in central cities, crime committed disproportionately by blacks, and if politicians exploit these fears, then the problem is defined as the racist exploitation of baseless stereotypes. If whites reject racial preferences as unfair to them, and if politicians campaign on the issue, the problem is construed as a lack of restraint by unscrupulous candidates who are willing to use divisive tactics to achieve their ends. Today's orthodoxy holds in contempt the need to express concern for, and acknowledge the legitimacy of, the sensibilities of whites when they run up against the presumed interests of blacks. What Washington understood—something as true today as it is difficult to say out loud—is that attending to the sensibilities of whites is directly in the interest of blacks. Because we live in a democracy, we bear the burden of persuading our fellows of the worth of our claims upon them.

The political version of crying racism in the face of every form of opposition to, say, busing or affirmative action has brought on the current crisis in the politics of both blacks and white liberals. Let us stipulate, for argument's sake, that the Willie Horton ad should not have been run; what do we say about the fact that it worked so well? Let us assume that the "white hands" ad of Jesse Helms was inappropriate; what are we to make of the fact that it had such an impact?

The orthodox answer, as we know, is that these phenomena simply give further evidence of the fundamentally racist character of the American polity. Rights advocates hope to banish such tactics from the political arena through moral suasion. They set out to achieve unilateral Republican disarmament—as if Republican restraint in appealing to whites' concerns will somehow cause those concerns to disappear. This is the ambition of people who simply do not take American voters seriously. It is not useful to assume that the voters

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who responded to the Helms or Bush commercials, or even to David Duke, are simply racists. No doubt some of them are, but that is beside the point—which is, that many, many of these voters have legitimate concerns to which an effective politics must give answers, not lectures on racial etiquette.

Washington readily accepted the constraint that progress for blacks depended upon their being sensitive to the concerns of whites. Indeed, every black leader who has managed to wield any influence has had to work within such a constraint. Only in our time has the notion been advanced that "authentic" black leaders should be unencumbered by the need to assuage white opinion. Only in our time do we draw electoral district lines so that black representatives may be assured of election without the inconvenience of having to solicit white votes. Not that such redistricting is always wrong or unfair. But there is a fundamental tradeoff involved here: majority black districts raise the likelihood of the black candidate's success while lowering the probability that his election will bring along white support for his program.

A central feature of the old civil rights activism was its aim to persuade. Martin Luther King and his followers engaged in open protest against clear instances of social injustice, and they did not share Booker T. Washington's aversion to civil rights agitation; quite the contrary. But they sought, through nonviolent civil disobedience, to compel the affirmation of common principles from their fellow citizens, relying on the humanity and decency of the vast majority of Americans and thereby showing respect for the moral integrity of their fellows. They always appealed to *someone's* moral sensibilities—if not those of their immediate foes, then to those of white onlookers who tacitly accepted segregation, and also to blacks themselves whose complicity had made the system easier to sustain.

Dr. King was a leader of both black and white Americans. His stature in each community depended upon his influence in the other. The dramatic public confrontations he and others in the movement engineered were viewed by multiple audiences—white and black—each being aware that the others were watching. Through the morally persuasive nature of his appeal, King mobilized the conscience of the white majority. In so doing, he also convinced many blacks that there was realistic hope, at long last, that their essential interests would be accommodated. King thus confronted the most critical task any leader faces when seeking to promote racial harmony: assuring the "good people" on each side of the racial divide that their counterparts on the other side do, in fact, exist. He sought to create a dynamic within which growing numbers of Americans could embrace a strategy of reconciliation among decent people of both races.

It is a telling commentary on the moral confusion of today's orthodoxy that so many young blacks see in Malcolm X and Martin King a legitimate polarity of philosophic alternatives. Yet on the point that the interests of blacks, properly understood, are inescapably intertwined with the concerns and sensibilities of whites, Malcolm provides very poor guidance. But it is to the radicalism of Malcolm X that the Afrocentrist, rejectionist rabble-rousers like Al Sharpton look for inspiration. And it is precisely because the civil rights establishment has itself lost sight of the need to take whites' fears and revulsions seriously that they are willing and able to remain speechless in the wake of the excesses of Sharpton, Jeffries, Farrakahn, et al.

What, for example, did we see in response to the Central Park jogger episode? Incredible public displays of contempt for white opinion, in defense of the indefensible, and all with the tacit, if not explicit, support of much of mainstream black opinion. What did we see in Crown Heights? We saw murderously rampaging mobs of black youths, openly incited by Sharpton and others, who through this rampage precisely gained status and prestige for themselves as brokers of the peace. Leaders like Sharpton are the natural consequence of the abandonment by more respectable black advocates of that cardinal principle which Washington understood so well. The message transmitted is that blacks are openly contemptuous of white opinion, seeking not to persuade but either to cajole or to frighten. Although, as did King, Sharpton leads marches through white neighborhoods, the Italians and Jews of Brooklyn are mere supernumeraries in a political drama within the black community itself. Sharpton wants blacks to see whites at their most primitive and racist. And if he creates occasions for whites to see blacks at their most atavistic and violent, this suits his purposes as well. The apparently intended effect of such "leadership" is to ensure that the people of bad will in both races will find each other, the better to keep conflict alive.

The truth is that whites do not need to be shown how to fear black youths in the cities; instead, they need to be taught how to respect them. This means that effective, persuasive black leadership must project to these whites the image of a disciplined, respectable black demeanor. That such comportment is not inconsistent with protest for redress of grievances is a great lesson and a great legacy of the civil rights movement. But it is not just discipline in protesting that is needed. Discipline, orderliness, and virtue *in every aspect of life* contribute to the goal of creating an aura of respectability and deservingness. Such an aura is a valuable political asset.

The point is that racial oppression tangibly diminishes its victims, in their own eyes and in

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the eyes of others. Thus the construction of new public identities, and simultaneously the promotion of self-respect, are crucial tasks facing those burdened with a history of oppression. If this cannot be done, there can be no recovery from past victimization. A leading civil rights advocate teaches the exhortation: "I *am* somebody." True enough. The crucial question, however, is: "So what?" Because I am somebody, I will not accept unequal rights. Because I am somebody, I will waste no opportunity to better myself. Because I am somebody, I will respect my body by not polluting it with drugs or promiscuous sex. Because I am somebody—in my home, in my community, in my nation—I will comport myself responsibly, I will be accountable, I will be available to serve others as well as myself. It is the doing of these fine things, not the saying of any fine words, that teaches oneself, and others, that one *is* somebody.

But how is this to be done? One must operate at two levels—playing the "inside game" and the "outside game." The outside game aims to secure rights by petitioning for redress of grievances. Booker T. Washington thought this could wait. He may have been tragically wrong, but we have since made up for his omission. Even so, we must proceed carefully, wary not to move in violation of clear public norms. Nonviolence was the key factor in securing the ultimate success of the revolt against Jim Crow that eventually came to the South. Perhaps paradoxically, nonviolence was the more manly course, as well as the more publicly acceptable one. This is where Malcolm X, and his followers in the urban centers of today, have gotten it so badly wrong. Kant defined enlightenment as "man's release from his self-incurred tutelage." Though blacks' tutelage has not been entirely self-incurred, the link between liberation and enlightenment is just as real for us: the black nonviolent disobedient realizes his own freedom by accepting the constraints of universal moral laws, by maintaining civility under strong provocation even when others do not. The discipline demanded by the practice of nonviolence provides irrefutable evidence of the humanity of the protester: Despite the oppressor's best efforts to perpetuate the myth of racial inferiority, it establishes that the protester *is* somebody in a way that violent protest never can.

The philosophy of self-help, of good old-fashioned "uplift," applies this same principle to the "inside game," that is, the striving for moral reform within the black community. Working diligently to overcome the profound pathology to be found in some quarters of contemporary black life establishes what too often is only asserted—that we are indeed a great people struggling under terrible odds to overcome the effects of profound historic wrongs. The doing of such work is the means by which we can gain freedom in its "larger and higher sense." Because we are free human agents, we are obligated to strive to reverse the debilitating patterns of social life that limit our progress. We are rightly judged by the extent to which we meet this responsibility. The liberal transaction in which victimized blacks insist upon relief from guilt-ridden whites often points away from the necessity for us to be engaged in our own improvement. It leads to a perverse "exhibitionism of nonachievement" by blacks (e.g., the remorseful recitation of statistics showing that more black men are in prisons than in colleges). It is as if the fact of our failure to meet a certain standard or surmount a certain obstacle must of necessity constitute evidence of a social or political failing by the larger society. Even, or perhaps especially, when whites engage in this transaction, one cannot help suspecting that they don't really believe what they claim to believe, and that for them black nonachievement has another, less respectable but never spoken, explanation.

The "inside game" is critical because, in the nature of the case, much of what needs doing cannot be done by outsiders. An overly simplistic socio-economic determinism continues to impute all manner of self-destructive and dysfunctional behavior now rampant in some black populations either, on the one side, to historical victimization, or, on the other, to the incentive provisions of certain government transfer programs. How then could it be that other disadvantaged communities have a way of overcoming such assaults and temptations? It is to take the black poor less seriously than they deserve to assume that, unless white people somewhere change what they are doing, poor blacks must live as many are now living.

It would be hard to overestimate such a task, but one must nevertheless believe that the levels of gang violence, drug abuse, family instability, sexual promiscuity, of sloth, of indifference to responsibility, etc., can, through concerted effort at the propagation of alternative values, be changed. In any case, through religious, civic, and voluntary efforts of all sorts, we must try. This is certainly not a problem to be seen exclusively in its racial dimension, but race is an important factor. Nor can the effort to overcome it be guided by a single program or strategy.

Any internal effort to reform the ways in which people live is not a task for the state in our liberal society. Rather it is one for what Peter Berger and Richard John Neuhaus have called the "mediating institutions." Mutually concerned persons who trust one another enough to be able to exchange criticism constructively, establish codes of personal conduct, and enforce social sanctions against what they judge to be undesirable behavior can create

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and enforce communal norms that lie beyond the capacity of the state effectively to promulgate. The coercive resources of the state, though great, are, to put it mildly, not subtle. And, of course, their application is in any case rightly limited by constitutional protections. But no one has a right to good standing among his fellows. We must strive through the "inside game" to create conditions in the communities of greatest concern where such status rewards may be denied those whose behavior violates reasonable norms of right conduct.

Moreover, self-help is critical to securing the sympathetic support of the rest of the political community. It is essential to establishing in the minds of whites the truth that the bulk of poor blacks are deserving of the help they so desperately need. Making the effort to help yourself clearly conveys this message. This is why the move to reform welfare programs so as to place some burden of responsibility on recipients does not threaten blacks. On the contrary, such reforms are a godsend, for they help to diffuse a potentially damaging stigma associated with the disproportionate dependence of blacks on state-funded transfers. Moreover, by according recipients the expectation that they are capable of meeting commonly held norms about how people should conduct their lives, welfare reform shows respect for the beneficiaries. Thus self-help is not a substitute for government provision but rather an essential complement to it, ensuring that the state-funded assistance is more effective, and that it is seen as legitimate by the political majorities who must approve it.

Now this is a case that cannot be proven. Beside being woefully politically incorrect, it is not based on scientific data. No doubt some people listening to this message will object that it gives aid and comfort to the political right. Nevertheless, it is crucially important to our nation that there be no more one-note politics from the Afro-American community. This is a great nation, a great people; and our national ideals, to which blacks are every bit as much heir as whites, are literally the envy of the world. The opportunities of this land, which continue to beckon to peoples the world over, are the birthright of black Americans. Yet too many of us lag behind others in exploiting this opportunity. We must empower ourselves to seize this opportunity more aggressively, so that we can fulfill what God has ordained for us to do.

Are blacks truly better off with this kind of thinking barred from American politics? Do the ideas of Booker T. Washington, as elaborated here, really have no place in the councils of the Supreme Court? Are such ideas, whether labeled "conservative" or otherwise, inauthentic, not genuinely "black"? Must we conclude that blacks espousing such ideas are a "discredit to their race"? That clearly was the message of the well-coordinated, nearly successful campaign to destroy Clarence Thomas' aspirations for higher office. Some black politicians and intellectuals still seek to discredit him, to deny his voice the weight that it deserves to command among our people and in the national dialogue.

Should this defensive and essentially reactionary effort of the civil rights advocates prevail, it will not be only a few outspoken individuals, or even only the black American political community, who will be the losers. This is not about a Clarence Thomas, or a Glenn Loury, or any other black critic of today's orthodoxy. What ultimately is at stake in our halting efforts to widen the national dialogue on racial matters is the determination of whether we Americans are going to fall apart, fighting with and picking at each other for the next two generations, or whether we are going to find some way to pull ourselves together and go forward into the twenty-first century as a strong, world-competitive, multiethnic nation. This is about whether we can develop and sustain sufficient ties across the many boundaries that separate us as to enable us to cooperate in our mutual interest.

This is not a message to be directed to blacks alone, of course. Neither Democrats or Republicans have distinguished themselves on the issue. But because of the relationship between permissible expression in national discourse, and in the sub-national discourse that takes place among blacks, a broadening of debate in the black community may encourage white politicians and intellectuals to speak, and think, with a greater measure of candor on this issue.

Advocates of a new public philosophy for black Americans, men like Clarence Thomas, are drawing on an old wisdom, well suited for our times. To advocate self-help, to argue that affirmative action cannot be a long-run solution to the problem of racial inequality, to suggest that some of what is transpiring in black communities reflects a spiritual malaise, to note that fundamental change will require that individual lives be transformed in ways that governments are ill-suited to do, to urge that we must look to how black men and women are relating to each other, how parents are bringing up their children, that we have to ask ourselves what *values* inform the behavior of our youth—to do these things is not to take a partisan position, or vent some neoconservative ideological screed. Rather, to take this radically dissident line of departure from the orthodoxy of the day is to speak what, for many blacks, is a truth inherited from our ancestors, a truth we know as a result of our awareness of our history coming out of slavery, a truth reflected in the ambiguous but great legacy of Booker T. Washington. FT

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To Students of Divinity: A Convocation Address

Philip Turner

People who talk overmuch about beginning a new phase of life often appear quite foolish. After all, we rarely know until much later the meaning of our past and the promise of our future. Our ignorance and confusion alone ought to suggest that at times of transition (like the beginning of a new academic year), it may prove the better part of wisdom to imitate Mary, the mother of Jesus, on the occasion of the annunciation, and simply remain silent. You will remember that when the Angel of the Lord came to tell her about what, with a touch of irony, we may call the beginning of a new "term," she didn't run right out and tell everyone about the visit. She simply "kept all these things and pondered them in her heart."

I have always found Mary's example moving, but on an occasion like this, it presents me with no small problem. I can hardly, at the beginning of our term, stand before you silently pondering things in my heart. I am expected to say something: but what is there to say that will prove wise rather than foolish, faithful rather than disobedient?

It would certainly be both unwise and disobedient for me to say much about the fact that, by coming to be Dean of Berkeley, I am beginning a very new phase in my own life. In that respect, it is enough to say that coming here has made me as happy as any human on this earth can expect to be, and that I have been treated with a graciousness that is as rare as it is welcome. It would also be foolish for me to attempt a portrayal of the particular transitions that this new term may bring to each of your lives. I can only hope that they bring to you the same delight this beginning has brought to me.

It would be unwise, and probably self-serving, to say much more than this about the particular beginnings each of us may be making. The question, therefore, must shift from what each of us may be tempted to say on this occasion about ourselves to what the significance of the occasion may be for all of us together. The question we can most fruitfully ponder and say something about is why *we* are here, as a *body*, making *this* particular beginning.

It may be an unexpected point to make, but the name of the institution of which we are all a part suggests an answer. The answer suggested is not only surprising but also a little disturbing. I don't know if you noticed, but the name of our institution suggests that we are here to study divinity.

In this day and age, an undertaking of this sort, to most, seems strange, perhaps even dubious. You will have noted, for example, that the study of God (rather than religion) is not an occupation high on the list of priorities set forth in the development plans of most of our colleges and universities. Furthermore, to an increasing number of our contemporaries, what we are doing is at best "a bit out of it," and at worst culpably ignorant. We may, according to current wisdom, safely study the human phenomenon we call "religion." That endeavor, after all, does not lie outside the parameters of scientific and humanistic study; however, the study of "divinity" is quite another matter. The actual study of God is a suspect undertaking.

Be that as it may, the study of divinity is what this institution purports to be about; and by

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saying, in its most recent statement of purpose, that it exists to promote the knowledge and love of God, that its purpose is indeed the study of divinity, the Yale Divinity School has not only acted in a way faithful to its name and history, it has, at the same time, acted in a way that is contrary both to the spirit of the age, to prevailing academic orthodoxy, and, I am sorry to say, to present theological fashion.

In honoring its name, in making this statement of purpose, the Yale Divinity School will most certainly evoke protest from both internal and external sources. For the time being, however, "The Div School," by the very fact that its name perdures and its original purpose remains, has presented *us* with a serious matter both to ponder and talk about. If we indeed take it as our common purpose to study God, and so grow in the knowledge and love of God, what might that mean for us as we begin this new term?

It suggests that a passion for God is what we ought to share before all else. It suggests that God is, or ought to be, our first order of business, the primary focus of our energy, love, and work. Statements like these may appear banal or merely pious, but if we view them against the backdrop of our own theological history, they are far from either banality or vacuous piety.

What I mean is simple. Christ taught that the law of God (and so also the law of our life) is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. The love of God, he said, is the first commandment. The second, which is like the first, but not the first, is to love our neighbor, not as God but as ourselves.

We all know that this is the teaching of Christ. Nevertheless, I believe that, from the time of the Enlightenment to the present, one can read the history of the study of divinity as one in which the second commandment, which is like the first but not the first, has increasingly been made into the first and then the only commandment. The study of divinity has become, in short, less and less the study of God and more and more the study of us.

The reasons for this history are not all nefarious. Teilhard de Chardin once said that all Christians are stretched out upon a cross that pulls them in the direction of both heaven and earth. Teilhard, as had many of the Saints before him, realized that the love of God and the love of neighbor are commandments that may direct our energies in very different directions. Trying to follow them both stretches us and in a way crucifies us. How indeed are we to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and at the same time love our neighbor as ourselves? The answer has never been obvious to the Saints, and, what is more, they often got it wrong.

In the Patristic period, both Origen in the East and Augustine in the West tried to resolve the tension in a way that now appears unsatisfactory and in certain ways rather destructive. Each tended to place such emphasis upon the first commandment that the second, while not eliminated, was largely eclipsed. The supposed errors of the ancients are now common coin. Nevertheless, it seems plain as well that many theologians in the modern period, partly in reaction to their predecessors, have executed a reverse maneuver that has several problems of its own. In order to right the balance and place proper emphasis upon the importance of life here on earth, they have focused attention on the second rather than the first commandment. Their intentions may have been quite the contrary, but in calling for this change in emphasis they have in fact put the second commandment in place of the first and, in so doing, turned the first into little more than an engine for human betterment. One might paraphrase the version of the summary of the law as actually understood by many representatives of modern Western theology as "Thou shalt love thy neighbor with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, namely, thou shalt love God as thyself."

This paraphrase is, I know, a parody that is both unfair and unnuanced, but it serves well enough to make the point that to espouse as one's purpose the promotion of the knowledge and love of God is, in our time, an act that runs against both theological fashion and the spirit of the age. The espousal of this purpose rather than the dominant purpose of liberal religion and enlightened society implies that, at the beginning of our term, we are being asked to consider a great reversal in our de facto motivation and purpose.

I am not suggesting that a renewed interest in God requires a renewed eclipse of our neighbor. I am not advocating a return to the status quo ante when Christian belief and life were carried on as if our neighbor were significant only as a means to learn the love of God. I am, however, saying that we will get little right about either God or our neighbor until we have shifted the primary focus of our attention once more to the first and great commandment. Only then will we rightly understand the second which is like unto it.

What, in a more concrete sense, might a shared intention to study divinity imply for the way in which we, at the beginning of this new term, seek to give order to our lives? Just what is the nature of the work required of us if we are to treat the first commandment as indeed the first and not as a merely pious addendum to the second?

It is not the most immediate answer that comes to mind, but what God asks us to put first, rather than last, in the study of divinity, is worship. God

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is God precisely because, unlike us, God is worthy of worship. He commands us to love him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength because such a response is appropriate to who God is. It is the very nature of God both to elicit and demand worship, and it is a mark of his kindness that all people have been created with this purpose in mind. If you will, worship is the act that most corresponds both to the grace God shows toward us and to the nature with which we have have been endowed. Consequently, we can know neither God nor ourselves apart from it, and when we place it low on the list of things we have to do, as usually happens soon after the beginning of the semester, we both dishonor God and do harm to ourselves.

But the importance of worship for our common purpose can be made clear in a more homely way. Consider, if you will, the destructive division we often experience, in the study of divinity, between our heads and our hearts. There are two pitfalls that lie in wait for people like ourselves who seek to grow in the knowledge and love of God. We may seek to know God without loving God. In this case, head dominates heart, and God becomes little more than a subject of research.

There is an opposite error that is equally destructive. In this case, heart dominates head. We may seek to love God without seeking to know God. When this happens, we may come to love God but, in the words of St. Augustine, we will most certainly end by loving him as "other than he is." If we seek to love God without seeking to know God, we will find that we have given our love to a god of our own making.

Need the study of divinity split head and heart? Need it end in the pursuit of a powerless thought or the adoration of an idol? We have been promised that if we worship God daily in the midst of his people, and if our worship remains faithful to the teaching of the Apostles, God will be made known to us in both Spirit and Truth. God has assured us that in and through the faithful worship of the Church, both our minds and our hearts will be opened, and that we will learn both to know God in truth and love God as God in fact is. It is, in short, in the midst of the worship of God's people that we find the welcome assurance that our purpose in the study of divinity will not be frustrated.

Because of this assurance, we can more easily undertake the other tasks entailed by the study of divinity. One of these is mastery of the tradition through which the teaching of the Apostles has come down to us. It is basic to Christian belief that we cannot know God save as God makes himself known. God insists upon naming himself and will not allow us to attach to him names of our own devising.

But what does God's name mean and what does it imply for our life together here on earth? The great theological questions are, who is God and what does he require? These questions define the subject matter of the study of divinity, and Christians have believed through the ages that these questions can be adequately answered only as each generation appropriates the teaching passed on by the original witnesses of God's self-revelation in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. The study of divinity requires us, therefore, not only to master the Holy Scriptures of the Christian people, but also the history of their interpretation through the ages.

A comment like the one I have just made may seem unnecessary, but I am afraid it is not. American Christians may fairly be characterized as a body suffering from collective amnesia. On the whole, they know less and less about the way in which the tradition handed on by the Apostles has been interpreted and appropriated through the ages, and as their knowledge of that tradition decreases so also does the adequacy of what they have to say about who God is and what God requires. "Mainline Protestantism" is in retreat, I believe, because what it has to say about God is so inadequate; and what it has to say is so inadequate, in part, because it has lost its memory.

I am not suggesting that Christian tradition manifests a steady stream of development, or that it has remained in a steady state from the beginning, or that we can find it somewhere presented without distortion. I am saying only that I hope you will undertake in your study of divinity a reconstruction of the memory of our people. Do not follow the line of least resistance and jump over the past to get at the present. If you do, you may find a certain excitement in your studies, but you will not grow very much in the knowledge and love of God. You will more than likely spend your time looking into a mirror that reflects your own face.

One last word about the work implied by our common purpose. If I began by saying that we cannot study God apart from the worship of God, I must end by saying also that we cannot divorce either worship or study from an attempt to learn a way of life.

Both the liturgical and theological traditions of the Church present to us certain things that must be said about God as revealed in Christ Jesus. God is both truth and love. He manifests himself in both judgment and mercy. In coming to us he shows forgiveness, patience, and kindness even as he chastens us. In calling us to himself, God pays particular attention to those who are weakest and in most need of help.

That is what God is like. We believe it because we have seen the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus. But can we really know God's truth and love,

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God's judgment and mercy, God's forgiveness, patience, and kindness unless, in faith and hope, we seek to imitate what we have seen? Can we know the life of God apart from a struggle to share in it, and can we share in it if we do not seek to imitate it?

The study of divinity is not possible apart from what the author of the Epistle to the Ephesians dares to call the imitation of God. My observation is that most people who teach and study at divinity schools miss this point. That the way in which life together is conducted is as essential to the knowledge and love of God as is much reading: this is a truth lost to most of us most of the time. Nonetheless, apart from the way of life that imitates the life of God, our words about him are more like gossip than truth. We may use them, but we will most certainly misuse them because we have no real knowledge of what they mean.

I do not know what each of you may really want here, but if you want to grow in the knowledge and love of God, if you indeed wish to study divinity, try right now to begin living the life. Try, for example, to refrain from certain things like gossip, anger, greed, and envy; and try to learn some others like patience, kindness, love of one's enemies, and care for those among us who are not much liked. God is like that and by very inadequate imitation we might learn what the words we study really mean. If we seek to imitate the life as we worship and study, we might actually end up having spent two or three years here in the study of divinity. FT

"La Belle Tontina"

For Nicola

I send fond wishes to a horse named Tonto
And you, sweet Nicola, who once was wont to
Cross a busy London thoroughfare
To ride about the Common on this mare.
But there's another matter that's still pending,
And that's her boyish name you keep defending.

A change to something like *La Belle Tontina*
Would please no less than 'Lizabeth Regina
When next you're having tea at Buckingham
Just ask Her as She's heaping scones with jam.
She'll answer in her candid, regal way:
"Naming in the Kingdom mustn't stray

From what we're all accustomed to from birth.
What's so in Penzance, no less so in Perth;
And think on T's poor beastly mental state,
When some curvaceous, flirty stable mate
Gives her mane a playful little shake
And Tonto has no clue of what's at stake.

She'll anguish that her name is all too true
Some ghastly psychic funk might then ensue
And fling her onto Freud's most spacious couch
Making Daddy's pocket book cry — Ouch!"
So why not heed your Monarch's kind advice,
Accept this stupid, trifling sacrifice.

Joseph Taylor

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A Common Enemy, A Common Cause

John Courtney Murray

On June 24, 1992 the Supreme Court handed down Lee v. Weisman, *a decision that declares officially sponsored prayer at the graduation exercises of government schools to be unconstitutional. The following article is the previously unpublished text of an address given by Father John Courtney Murray (1904-1967) on May 3, 1948, to an audience of Catholics and non-Catholics in Wilmington, Delaware. On page 32 is a public statement issued shortly thereafter (June 17) by some of the most influential Protestant leaders in America. The latter statement emerged from a meeting in New York City that was addressed by both Murray and Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) of Union Theological Seminary.*

Both statements could not be more pressingly pertinent to church-state disputes today. Although made in response to Court rulings of the late 1940s (Everson v. Board of Education *[1947] and* McCollum v. Board of Education *[1948]), they directly join the arguments of the current* Weisman *decision. The Court has been going over and over the same territory for forty-five years. In* Weisman *a narrow five-to-four majority (Blackmun, Kennedy, O'Connor, Souter, and Stevens) prolonged the conventional wisdom of the* Everson *decision. As the vigorous dissent by Rehnquist, Scalia, Thomas, and White makes clear, however, the conventional wisdom of "strict separationism" is under heavy attack. A change of only one vote would retire the weary argument that the separation of church and state means the separation of religion from public life. That one vote may soon be available. Blackmun and Stevens are considered the most likely members of the Court to be replaced in the near future, and O'Connor, while joining in the* Weisman *majority, has indicated her dissatisfaction with existing church-state doctrine. (Souter, in a long and somewhat confusing concurring opinion in* Weisman, *presents himself as the strictest of separationists on the Court.)*

In the 1948 Wilmington address, John Courtney Murray, who was the chief architect of the Second Vatican Council's "Declaration on Religious Freedom," is stunningly prescient on a number of scores, not least in his recognition of the inherent difficulties in accommodating religion within a unitary public school system. His concluding challenge in that connection is today answered by the growing movement toward "school choice" that would empower parents to decide the values by which their children should be educated (see John Coons, "School Choice as Simple Justice," FT, April). It might also be noted that the statement by Protestant leaders reflects the role of "mainline" Protestantism at that time. Both they and Father Murray assumed that they had a singular responsibility for the religio-cultural well-being of the society. Almost half-a-century later, mainline/oldline Protestantism appears to be more given to applauding the secularization that the Niebuhrs et al. protested in 1948. Views analogous to those of the liberal Protestants of that day are today advanced almost exclusively by those who are called evangelicals or fundamentalists. This change is of much more than merely historical interest.

We had thought to publish a thorough editorial critique of the Weisman *decision. But these two statements say it better than we could. We are grateful to Father Joseph Komonchak of Catholic University who discovered them in the archives of the university and brought them to our attention.*

—The Editors

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I

In order to understand the issues raised by the [*McCollum*] decision, we must have in mind at least an outline of the facts of the case.

First, the Champaign, Illinois [religious education] plan [that gave rise to the case] had its origin in a social problem—an alarming rise in juvenile delinquency within the communities of the county, about the year 1940. This situation was of concern both to the State and to the churches within the region. This fact first suggested the idea that some cooperation between church and state would be desirable in the interests of a solution of the problem. It was thought that a program of religious education, in which the local schools and the local churches would cooperate, would be a helpful instrument in meeting the social situation.

Secondly, the Champaign plan was an instance of wholly voluntary cooperation, from beginning to end. There was voluntary cooperation among the religious bodies in forming the Champaign Council on Religious Education, a board composed of representatives of all the local churches who wished representation; none were excluded. This board selected the religion teachers and paid them, and exercised some supervision over the teaching materials to insure that they would not arouse religious controversy of an undesirable kind. Again, the school board, when approached by the Council, gave its voluntary cooperation. This chiefly consisted in permission to use the school buildings for the religion classes. The reasons for the permission were the convenience and safety of the children, lest they be obliged to go off to their several churches, with consequent loss of time and some danger. For the rest, the school personnel cooperated by issuing and collecting "Parents' Request Cards." On these cards the parents requested the school to permit their child to attend the particular religion class of the parents' choice. Note, in this respect, how the school considered itself, as it should, simply the agent of the parents' wishes. Note, too, that the school's cooperation was given in the interests of the community.

Thirdly, the whole plan was carried on under full respect for the rights of conscience, and for the equality of all religious faiths before the law of the State. This point was fully explored in the Supreme Court of Illinois, and no fault was found, or could be found, with the plan in this respect.

Fourthly, the operation of the plan approved itself to the conscience of the community during all the time of its operation. Everybody was satisfied with it. Everybody, that is, except a certain Mrs. Vashti McCollum, an avowed atheist, daughter of a prominent and very articulate, if not always respectfully articulate, freethinker. (Recently, at an interview in New York, she maintained that she was not an atheist, but a "humanist"; her earlier protestations of her atheism had won for her considerable unfavorable publicity.) She objected to the embarrassment to which her son, James Terry, . . . was subjected because he happened to be the only child in his class who took no religious instruction. She maintained, in sum, that the Champaign plan was a violation of religious freedom, as guaranteed by the State and Federal Constitution. And she wanted it stopped. In effect, she wanted not only to end the released-time religious instruction, but also to

> ban every form of teaching which suggests or recognizes that there is a God. She would ban all teaching of the Scriptures. She especially mentioned as an example of invasion of her rights "having pupils learn and recite such statements as, 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.' " And she objects to teaching that the King James version of the Bible is the "Christian's guide book, the Holy Writ, and Word of God," and many other similar matters (quoted from [Mr. Justice] Jackson's decision).

In a word, she made perhaps the strongest and most sweeping plea ever made in American history for the banishing of all religion from the public school.

It is not definitely known how far Mrs. McCollum was the instrument of antireligious forces. At all events, she appears as something of a symbol. And the thing she symbolizes is not pleasant to contemplate—a growing body of American citizenry that is actively opposed to traditional religion, and anxious to translate its opposition into law.

The whole case would probably have died after the Illinois Supreme Court decided that the Champaign plan was entirely constitutional had not the U.S. Supreme Court in the meantime handed down its decision in the *Everson* case, based on the new principle that "aid to religion" was a violation of the "establishment of religion" clause of the First Amendment. (The question of "establishment of religion" had not been raised in the lower courts.) In the light of this new development, the *McCollum* case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, and was decided by it on March 8.

(I leave to the lawyers the nice question of whether

JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY, S.J., *was the leading American Catholic expert on church-state relations in the postwar era. His arguments in support of religious freedom, at first highly controversial in Church circles, were fully endorsed in Vatican II's statement on the subject,* Dignitatis Humanae *(1965). Murray's fullest statement of the compatibility between the American proposition and Roman Catholic teaching is in* We Hold These Truths *(1960).*

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the U.S. Supreme Court really had jurisdiction in the case, since—as Mr. Justice Jackson pointed out—it involved no violation of a personal liberty or a property right.)

The Champaign plan was struck down as unconstitutional—contrary to the "establishment" clause of the First Amendment—on two grounds. First, [because] it involved "use of tax supported property for religious instruction"; and secondly, because it involved "close cooperation between school authorities and the religious council in promoting religious education." To these two specific reasons Mr. Justice Black added, at the end of his opinion, a more generalized and very ominous reason, when he stated that it is unconstitutional to make "use of the State's compulsory education machinery to provide pupils for religious classes."

Mr. Black's opinion has astonished lawyers by its brevity; there is no appeal to legal argument or to history. The lengthy historical and legal argument advanced by the counsel for the Champaign County school board is curtly dismissed. Mr. Black simply says that the Court made a rule of constitutional law in the *Everson* case and we appeal to it now in striking down the Champaign plan. The interesting thing is that when the rule of law was made in the *Everson* case, no argument was advanced to support it. And it was a new rule of law. It gave a developed meaning to the First Amendment that the First Amendment never before was thought to bear within it.

Historically, the First Amendment forbade a national establishment of religion, a State Church in the accepted meaning of the term, as one sees it today in Norway and Sweden (where the Lutheran Church is established by law), or in Spain (where the Catholic Church is established). Essentially, the First Amendment forbade our national government to *prefer* one religion above another, or make observance or support of it obligatory by law. Our new constitutional law, as laid down in the *Everson* case and reaffirmed in the *McCollum* case, forbids much more than this. It states that "Neither (State or Federal government) can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another." In other words, to the notion of "no establishment of religion" has been added the notion of "no aid to religion." Our original constitutional doctrine simply affirmed the equality of all religious faiths before the law of the land; our new constitutional doctrine affirms something much more radical and sweeping—it affirms the so-called principle of the "absolute separation of church and state." And on grounds of this principle it forbids "cooperation between school authorities and a religious council in promoting religious education," as this cooperation appears in the Champaign plan.

There is our constitutional situation, as of the moment. There we are. The interesting thing is that everybody is asking: "Where are we?" The exact meaning and full implications of the *McCollum* decision, and of the rule of constitutional [law] on which it is based, are by no means clear. The "principle of separation of church and state," says Mr. Frankfurter, is a "spacious conception," whose meaning "is unfolded as appeal is made to the principle from case to case." It is not a "full-blown principle, nor one having the definiteness of a surveyor's metes and bounds." Indeed not. It is quite obvious to the citizen that the Supreme Court has given to the principle of separation of church and state a "spaciousness" it never had before; and we have no way of knowing whether the principle is going in the future to be made to cover more ground than it did in the *McCollum* decision. The Supreme Court has blown up the principle to an already rather terrifying size. And no one knows how much more blowing they are prepared to do, in order to bring the principle to full-blown size.

As a matter of fact, many citizens are asking themselves: Has the conception of separation of church and state been already made too spacious? Has it been blown too big? Or—to change the metaphor—is Jefferson's famous "wall of separation between church and state" on the way to becoming an impenetrable barrier to cooperation between these two forces in society upon which the good of society depends?

Jefferson said: "I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.' " All of us in turn contemplate with equally sovereign reverence that same act of the whole American people—our First Amendment. We reverence it because it was prompted by sound ethical and political principles—chiefly the principle, as Jefferson put it, that "the legislative powers of government reach actions only, not opinions."

The difficulty is that the rule of constitutional law laid down in the *McCollum* decision is not the "act of the whole American people." There is, in fact, a large body of American citizens who view it with alarm; reactions in the press of the country have been widely unfavorable to it. Among those who do not recognize it as their act are a host of thoughtful Protestants and Jews as well as Catholics; with them, too, are men of no religious affiliation, but of some religious and civic feeling. Among all these men are lawyers, educators, men and women interested in public affairs and civic problems, fathers and mothers of American children. They do not feel that the Supreme Court is acting in their name. Nor do they consider that the

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new doctrine of absolute separation of church and state rests on the same simple ethical and political principles that underlay the First Amendment in its historic meaning. The premises of the new doctrine seem to them dubious, and the doctrine itself troubles them; they are worried about its validity, and concerned about its possible implications in many directions.

I am not therefore speaking simply for myself—nor only for my fellow Catholics—when I lay down this proposition with regard to the *McCollum* decision: that it cannot be approved first by the civic conscience, and secondly, by the religious conscience. It cannot be approved by the civic conscience because it is a radical departure from our Federal constitutional tradition. And it cannot be approved by the religious conscience because it is, in effect, a legal victory for secularism. These are the two topics on which I want to offer you an argument.

II

In proving my first point I shall make use of the argumentation very clearly and soberly presented by Mr. Justice Reed, the lone dissenter in the case, whose opinion, I hope, may one day be looked back on as one of the great dissents of our times. He says: "I am convinced that [the] interpretation of the First Amendment [given by the majority] is erroneous." With this I agree and many others agree.

I should accept, with Mr. Reed, the fact that there is an original meaning of the First Amendment and a developed meaning. In its original meaning, the First Amendment forbade simply a State Church; it protected the citizens of the U.S. from the imposition on them by law of a national faith and mode of worship. "Passing years, however," says Mr. Reed, "have brought about acceptance of a broader meaning." In this meaning, he says, the First Amendment forbids government, State or Federal, not merely to prefer one religion over another, but also "to aid any or all religions."

However, he goes on, this broader meaning ("no aid to religion") cannot immediately be made into a rule of law that will cover all cases. [Here,] two very necessary distinctions must first be made. They must be made because Thomas Jefferson himself made them, and because they have become "so much a part of our tradition and culture that they are accepted without more ado."

There is, first, the distinction between the relations of government to religion, to the church as such—its faith, its worship, its strictly ecclesiastical functions—and the relations of government to religious education. The distinction clearly appears in the conduct of Jefferson as Rector of the University of Virginia. Jefferson did want a wall of separation between government and the church as such; but he did not think it necessary—in fact, he thought it very undesirable—that there should be a wall of separation between government and

Statement on Church and State

June 17, 1948

Recent decisions of the Supreme Court have extended the meaning of the constitutional prohibition of an establishment of religion so that any action by the state that is intended to benefit all religious bodies without discrimination is forbidden. This development of the conception of separation of church and state seems to us to be unwarranted by the language of the First Amendment and to bring about a situation in which forms of cooperation between church and state that have been taken for granted by the American people will be endangered. We believe that, whatever its intention may be, this hardening of the idea of "separation" by the Court will greatly accelerate the trend toward the secularization of our culture. We favor the separation of church and state in the sense which we believe to have been intended in the First Amendment. This prohibited the state from giving any church or religious body a favored position, and from controlling the religious institutions of the nation. We contend that Jefferson's oft-quoted words, "wall of separation," which are not in the Constitution but which are used by the Court in the interpretation of the Constitution, are a misleading metaphor. Cooperation, entered into freely by the state and church and involving no special privilege to any church and no threat to the religious liberty of any citizen, should be permitted. As Protestants we desire to affirm this interpretation of the American doctrine of separation of church and state, and to protest against the interpretation that has been formulated by the Supreme Court.

The situation created by these decisions of our highest Court makes clear that it is important for our great religious communions, without obscuring their differences of faith and policy, to explore the possibilities of working together. Only as we realize such possibilities shall we succeed in maintaining the religious foundations of our national life.

Signatories:

Bishop James C. Baker
Mr. Eugene E. Barnett
Professor John Coleman Bennett
Mr. John Crosby Brown
Professor Robert L. Calhoun
Rt. Rev. Angus Dun
Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick
Dr. Charles W. Gilkey
Dr. Douglas Horton
Professor Walter M. Horton
Dr. Lynn Harold Hough
Dr. Henry Smith Leiper
Dr. Benjamin E. Mays
Bishop Francis J. McConnell
Mr. Francis P. Miller
Professor H. Richard Niebuhr
Professor Reinhold Niebuhr
Professor Justin Wroe Nixon
Mr. Andrew H. Phelps
Professor Liston Pope
Rt. Rev. Edward L. Parsons
Rt. Rev. William Scarlett
Professor H. Shelton Smith
President Henry P. Van Dusen
Mr. Charles T. White

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religious education. And he freely lent the cooperation of the University he founded to "instruction in religious opinion and duties" by the various sects of his State. Neither he nor James Madison considered that this was any violation of U.S. constitutional requirements. As Reed puts it: "The difference between the generality of his statements on separation of church and state and the specificity of his conclusions on education are considerable. A rule of law should not be drawn from a figure of speech."

Here precisely is the first place in which the majority opinion shows up as unhistorical, arbitrary, far too cut-and-thrust: it takes Jefferson's metaphor, "wall of separation," and applies it slam-bang to an education situation, failing to consider, as Jefferson considered, that the field of education is a special field, in which church and state meet on common ground, [where] rules of law cannot be drawn from figures of speech, but [must] be carefully formulated, in a reasonable, realistic way, under due regard for the facts and the special requirements of an educational situation. In a word, Mr. Reed suggests, governmental cooperation with programs of religious instruction, carried on with due regard for religious freedom, is not immediately outlawed by the metaphor, "wall of separation."

The Court's failure to make this first distinction leads it to overlook a second vital distinction—a distinction in the concept, "aid to religion." What the developed meaning of the First Amendment forbids, Mr. Reed well says, is "purposeful assistance directly to the church itself or to some religious group or organization doing religious work of such a character that it may fairly be said to be performing ecclesiastical functions." So, for instance, government could not appropriate money to build churches, pay ministers to serve them, furnish transportation to parishioners, print Missals or hymn books or propaganda literature, etc. However, the "aid to religion" forbidden by the Constitution does not forbid, Reed goes on, "those incidental advantages that religious bodies, with other groups similarly situated, obtain as a by-product of organized society."

Mr. Reed finds this distinction embedded in the "well-recognized and long-established practice" of our legislatures. On grounds of it, he explains the unchallenged constitutionality of tax exemption for church property, bus transportation for church-school pupils and free nonreligious textbooks and lunches for them, aid to hospitals under religious auspices, chaplains in legislatures and the armed forces, the G.I. Bill of Rights, religious activities at West Point and Annapolis, and the cooperation of public school authorities in various forms of released-time religious instruction.

All of these governmental practices involve some manner of "aid to religion," but in the form of incidental advantage that the churches derive as a by-product of the government's organizing activity. Mr. Reed seems to suggest that the basic reason why long-standing practices of government have freely granted these incidental advantages is this: that "recognition of the interest of our nation in religion," as an important element in organized American society, has traditionally been considered as binding on government.

For instance, when government organizes an army, it recognizes that the men it organizes into an army are religious men; their religion is as vital to them as their citizenship, and more so. Consequently, as part of its organization of an army, it organizes a chaplains' corps, thus recognizing the fact that its soldiers are not only citizens but religious men, whose religion must be effectively recognized by government as a social fact and need quite as imperative, surely, as the soldier's need for services to his health. From the process the churches do indeed derive aid, but not the kind of aid that falls under constitutional ban.

Apply this traditional conception to the field of education. Government now organizes a school system; the children whom it compels to attend these schools are children of religious parents. Is government to be forbidden to recognize this fact . . . ? Or the further fact that parents may wish the school somehow to cooperate with them and with their church in the religious education of their children? Is all such cooperation to be banned forthwith, as contrary to a doctrinaire conception of separation of church and state, as somehow implying a constitutionally forbidden "aid to religion"? This is not, I think, a reasonable, nor an historical, nor even a socially desirable construction of the First Amendment. There are indeed constitutional limitations on such cooperation; but Mr. Justice Jackson indicated them adequately when he said that "a Federal Court may interfere with local school authorities only when they invade either a personal liberty or a property right protected by the Federal Constitution." It is the high function of the Court to defend the American order of rights and liberties, as these have been traditionally conceived, and as they must be given clearer formulation in the light of changing conditions. But the Court debases its own high function in American society when it acts counter to a central tradition in American society—the tradition of voluntary and reasonable cooperation, under respect for religious and civic rights, between government and religious forces in education. If this cooperation results in "incidental advantages" to religion, it is not the kind of "aid to religion" that was outlawed by "that act of the whole American people," which all of us "contemplate with sovereign reverence" as the First Amend-

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ment to the Constitution.

A vital distinction has been here overlooked. And the result has been an erroneous interpretation of the First Amendment—a "rigid interpretation," as Mr. Reed well says, "that conflicts with accepted habits of our people." That is why the interpretation is erroneous—because it is rigid, ruthless, sweeping. It insists, in Mr. Justice Frankfurter's words, that separation of church and state in the U.S. is "absolute." The history of our country proves that this is not so. And the people of our country as a whole do not want it so. They will, I think, agree with Mr. Reed that our constitutional separation of church and state "is not an absolute prohibition against every conceivable situation in which the two may work together, any more than the other provisions of the First Amendment—free speech, free press—are absolutes."

The word "absolute" in the opinion of the Court is the word that does the damage. It brings the new constitutional doctrine that does the damage. It brings the new constitutional doctrine squarely into conflict, as Mr. Reed suggests, with "practices embedded in our society by many years of experience." These practices illustrate a central American tradition of cooperation of church and state. The new constitutional doctrine, in pushing separation of church and state to unhistorical extremes, not warranted by the Constitution itself, strikes at this tradition of cooperation.

And this, in brief, is why I say, simply as a citizen, that the *McCollum* decision, and the rigid, sweeping doctrine of separation of church and state on which it is based, cannot be approved by the civic conscience.

III

My second point is that the *McCollum* decision cannot be approved by the religious conscience, because it is a legal victory for secularism, especially in our public school system. It is, in effect, an act hostile to the interests of religion in American society.

Understand me exactly. I am by no means imputing to the Supreme Court bench the intention of acting in the interests of secularism. Mr. Justice Black was at pains to say in his opinion that the decision does not "manifest a governmental hostility to religion or religious teachings." I accept this disclaimer as quite sincerely made. Nevertheless, I maintain my proposition; for I am looking to the effect of his decision, to its tendency, to the use that will be made of it. In the light of these things our newly rigid law of separation of church and state must be judged by the religious conscience (not in the light of the intentions of the judges who made the law). A law is a form of social pressure; it bears on the shape and spirit of social institutions, and it moves society in one direction or another. As a citizen and a religious man, one may therefore ask: In what direction will this decision press and push and move American society, especially the institution of the school? And I answer: In the direction of secularism.

Let me pause here a moment to clear up a fundamental confusion that has crept into the opinions of both Mr. Black and Mr. Frankfurter, as an echo of Mr. Rutledge's dissent in the *Everson* case. Mr. Frankfurter quotes Mr. Rutledge: "We have staked the very existence of our country on the faith that complete separation between the state and religion is best for the state and best for religion." This is a piece of bad history, muddy political theory, and bad judicial thinking. First, we have not staked the existence of our country, as a political democracy, on any "faith," but simply on a set of rational political principles, rather pragmatic in character; one of them is embedded in the First Amendment—the equality of all religions before the law, and the immunity of the religious conscience from governmental coercion. In the minds of the Founding Fathers, the First Amendment embodied no "faith," but a hard-headed piece of ethical common sense combined [with] a prudent and practical theory of government, as concerned only with the secular aspects of man's life, not with his religious opinions. Let us resist any attempt to turn the First Amendment into a bit of religious mysticism.

The bad judicial thinking comes in when the Supreme Court presumes to decide "what is best for religion." I know Mr. Rutledge was implicitly citing James Madison, in one of Madison's lapses. As a statesman, Madison's function was to decide what is best for the state, and only that. What was best for religion was quite flatly none of Mr. Madison's business; and it is none of Mr. Rutledge's, or Mr. Frankfurter's, or Mr. Black's. What is best for religion is a matter for judgment on the part of those who have the care of religion, not of officials of government—especially a government which is "separate" from religion. I, for one, do not like to see written into a Supreme Court opinion the dictum that separation of church and state is best for religion; it may be or it may not be, but judgment on the question is not within the province of the Supreme Court. When they begin judging what is best for religion, they are themselves violating the principle of separation of church and state!

Let me now return to my argument; the *McCollum* decision is, in effect (though not in the intention of the Court), a legal victory for secularism.

The first indication that this is so will come to light if I ask this question: Who are the men who claim this decision as a victory for themselves? Certainly not the thoughtful, religious men—

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Catholic and Protestant and Jewish. Their sober judgment looks upon the decision as a defeat. And they are clearly disturbed by it, and by its possible implications. Those who claim it as a victory are the secularists—those who in greater or lesser degree share the views of Mrs. McCollum—whether they call themselves atheists, agnostics, humanists, or what you will. Press reports already indicate that efforts to call into question other forms of released-time religious instruction will be made by such groups as the Freethinkers of America. These are the men who are rejoicing over the decision. Making common cause with them are a few, a very few, radical Protestants, who have given their names to that curious organization known as Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State. To the distress of their more temperate fellow Protestants, they have seen fit to join a dubiously holy alliance with a strange assortment of Masons and secularist educators in order to launch a campaign of political action, along religious lines, against the Catholic Church. All men are their friends who consider the Catholic Church as "the enemy." But they themselves are the friends neither of religion nor of democracy.

Turn, now, from the secularist forces that have acclaimed this decision to the secularizing effects inherent in the decision itself.

I think it may be fairly said that one important effect of this decision is to alter the spirit of the First Amendment. In its original conception, the spirit of the First Amendment was the spirit of a *friendly* separation between church and state. It was a friendly separation because it allowed latitude for cooperation between church and state in many matters, and notably in the field of education. . . . Cooperation in matters of common concern is the fruit of friendship. But the interpretation of the First Amendment that we now have makes separation of church and state less friendly than it was before; for it diminishes the possibility of cooperation between these two agencies that, each in its own way, serve the public welfare. Church and state now stand farther apart than ever in American history—at a time when the crisis of our times demands that, especially in what concerns the religious upbringing of our youth, they should stand closer together, not indeed confusing their different functions, but cooperating with one another in a common cause, in full loyalty to the First Amendment, but to the First Amendment as interpreted (as Mr. Reed says) in the light of the "precedents, customs, and practices" of the American people, and not in the light of doctrinaire assumptions.

Another effect of the decision is this: in consequence of our newly rigid separation of church and state, religion is less free in America today than it was yesterday. On the face of it, the Champaign Council on Religious Education is no longer free to cooperate with the public school system in carrying out the wishes of parents with regard to the religious instruction of their children. I could reconcile myself to this loss of freedom on the part of religious forces if I could persuade myself that it is a constitutional necessity. But in the light of Mr. Reed's argument and of other considerations I cannot so persuade myself. . . . What religion has lost in freedom, secularism has gained.

And at this point, I want to consider an argument advanced by Mr. Justice Frankfurter. He says: "Religious education so conducted on school time and property is patently woven into the working scheme of the school. The Champaign arrangement thus presents powerful elements of *inherent pressure* by the school system in the interest of religious sects." The school, he adds, somehow puts "constraint," "obvious pressure upon the children to attend" religious instruction. "The momentum of the whole school atmosphere and school planning is presumably put behind religious instruction." And this is an "intrusion of religious instruction into the public school system." This is bad, says Mr. Frankfurter—this "pressure" on the child to be religious. This, in fact, seems to be his main reason for [arguing] the unconstitutionality of this particular form of released-time instruction.

I admit that there is a difficult problem here. It is the whole problem of the public school. By its historical evolution the public school has got itself involved in a contradiction. It exists, supposedly, in order to promote democracy. Yet it is constitutionally forbidden to promote those religious beliefs which are the foundation of democracy. I do not know what the solution of this problem is; a host of serious men are perplexed by it. But I do know this: that Mr. Frankfurter has hopelessly simplified the problem. He wants to relieve the public school child of all "pressure" in the direction of religious belief, to "eliminate the operation of influence by the school in matters sacred to conscience and outside the school's domain." I do not, of course, concede that his argument is founded in fact. The keynote of the Champaign plan was its wholly voluntary character; to say that the school exerted pressure on the child is to misconceive the situation. Whatever pressures there were on the child came from the parents—and this manner of pressure has not yet, I hope, become unconstitutional. But take his argument—it illustrates a common fallacy today. Does he suppose that in removing from the child pressure *toward religion*, he has removed *all* pressure from the child? Has he created a vacuum? And rendered the child immune from antireligious

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pressures? He does not want the "momentum of the whole school atmosphere" put behind religious instruction; has he thereby deprived the school atmosphere of all momentum—brought it, as it were, to a standstill, so that it no longer "moves" the child in any direction?

This is unrealistic. Thousands of religious men and educators have been crying out for a long time that the momentum of the whole public school atmosphere is now being put behind secularism; that the sheer omission of religion from public schools creates a pressure on the child against religion, and puts a constraint on him to believe that what is not important enough to be taught in school is not important at all. If there is to be talk of pressures and constraints, let this pressure and this constraint be considered; otherwise the problem is not honestly considered. It does not do to say that pressure in favor of religion is unconstitutional, but pressure against religion is constitutional. It does not do to forbid positive religious instruction in public schools, on grounds that it implies the "operation of influence by the school in matters sacred to conscience," and then lightheartedly allow the school to use its enormous influence to favor what has been rightly called a "negative religious dogmatism," as if somehow this influence, now being terrifically exerted by the public school system, did not itself impose a crushing weight on the delicate religious conscience of the child.

Again I say, I do not know the answer to the problem of religion in the public school. But I can make bold to say that the Supreme Court does not know it either. Hence I could perhaps, as a citizen, address to them this respectful request: that at least they should not render impossible a solution to this problem by laying down a rigid and sweeping constitutional doctrine of separation of church and state that unreasonably, and in a manner contrary to American precedent, limits legislative freedom, which is freedom of the people, to cope with this problem. The Court stands indeed as the last and most welcome and cherished defender of our American order of personal liberties and property rights. But perhaps it would not be disrespectful of a citizen to ask that it should heed the hinted admonition of one of its own members, Mr. Justice Jackson, who suggested that the Court should not "allow zeal for [its] own ideas of what is good in public instruction to induce [it] to accept the role of a super board of education for every school district in the nation."

I think I have another request to make of it. In his opinion, in order to justify the Court's application to public education of its rigid doctrine of separation of church and state, Mr. Frankfurter felt it necessary to suggest something of a philosophy of public education. What I understand of this philosophy I do not like. It seems to make public education too much, too exclusively a creature of government, and an instrument of government. To this extent, it seems to make the child too much a creature of government, too exclusively subject to governmental judgment on what is good for him in education. I find little room in this philosophy of public education for the rights of the parent over the child and his education; and little room for the subjection of government itself to the wishes of the parent. I suggest that a philosophy of education is dangerous that does not allow full room in it for the parent; it lacks the necessary balance wheel, the truly democratic element. And I should view with intense alarm the development of a philosophy of public education in which the principle of separation of church and state would somehow entail, as a consequence, the separation of the parent from the child. I suggest, therefore, that it is not within the province of the Supreme Court, by any of its dicta, to further the development of such a philosophy of public education.

There is another development which it is beyond the province of the Supreme Court to assist. I mean the development of the "religion of democracy" as the national religion of the U.S., by law established. This "religion of democracy" is our great contemporary myth. It is a secularist system of values, constructed without reference to God or to any human destiny beyond this world, that presents itself as a higher, more unifying religion than all "sectarianism." It looks down with contempt upon the rivalries of sects, as somehow un-American. It wants all sectarian religion kept out of the public school, as divisive of the mystical unity of the American people, at the same time that it asserts itself to be the proper object of government support and promotion. Someone has called this "religion of democracy" the "public school sect." It is truly a sectarian religion, with an orthodoxy and a vocabulary all its own. It is our contemporary nationalist myth, and it is a dangerous myth. Fundamentally, it is as dangerous as the myth of race against which we fought a war, or the myth of class with which we are now engaged in struggle that, please God, may find some other issue than war. . . . It matters not whether the idol one worships is compounded of blood and soil, or made of seeming gold; it is none the less an idol. And the worship of idols is sacrilegious, and leads to enslavement. I am concerned about the rising religion of democracy, whose church would be the public school. The Supreme Court exists in order to protect the U.S. citizen from any establishment of religion in our democracy; it would be a curious irony if it somehow assisted the establishment of the religion of democracy.

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That is why I am concerned when I see occurring in a Supreme Court opinion echoes of the vocabulary of this new religious myth. It is said, for instance, by Mr. Frankfurter, that the public school is "the symbol of our democracy." It isn't, except to devotees of the religion of democracy, who, in their most orthodox moments, profess their faith in the public school as the "only American school," and who would wish to see the disappearance of all private schools, especially church-related schools, as somehow "divisive of our national unity." Actually, the symbol of our democracy in the field of education is our dual system of schools—public and private, nonsectarian and religious. This is the true symbol of educational democracy, because it proclaims that [it is not] the American government [that] is . . . the educator of the American child, but the American parent. Any attack on this dual system of schools, any movement for a single-school system, can only proceed from an ideology that is incompatible with democracy. Against such an attack (which is now going on) we expect the Supreme Court to be our strong defender. I hope, then, that in the future it will keep its symbols straight.

IV

Let me conclude, first, with a word to those of you who are Catholics, and then with a word to those who are not, but who sense with us the gravity of the present situation.

One form of released-time religious instruction has been struck down; its distinctive feature was that the instruction was given on school premises. Attempts will be made to have other forms of released-time likewise struck down. Now, released-time religious instruction was not a Catholic inspiration; nevertheless, Catholics have cooperated in such programs in the 2,000 American towns where they are conducted. And among the 2,000,000 children who benefit by them are many Catholic children. We Catholics, therefore, stand ready to defend these programs when and where they are attacked. We stand together with our Protestant and Jewish fellow citizens in this coming legal battle. We have our special interest—the education of our own children in the faith of the Catholic Church. But we have, too, a wider interest—the defense of an American freedom traditional in our society. I mean the freedom of the local community to manage its educational affairs, within reasonable constitutional limits. We want what Mr. Jackson called "some flexibility to meet local conditions, some chance to progress by trial and error," towards the solution of a major social and religious problem—the problem of religion in American education.

We are, as Catholics, committed in all sincerity to the constitutional principle of separation of church and state; Archbishop McNicholas, in the name of the American hierarchy, has recently stated our common loyalty to this wise and just provision. However, we believe, with Mr. Reed, that "devotion to the great principle of religious liberty should not lead us into a rigid interpretation of the constitutional guarantee that conflicts with established habits of our people." This is solid ground on which to stand; and it is common ground on which Protestant, Catholic, and Jew, and every man of good will can stand, to make common cause against a common enemy—secularism, which strikes not only at our respective religions, but at our common American freedom.

We, then, as Catholics are prepared to give our cooperation in this common cause—the defense of the "established habits" of our people, which are religious habits, and soundly democratic social habits, and habits of cooperation between church and state within the wise constitutional guarantees of personal liberties. . . . And it would be a great gain if every American Catholic were aware of this, our Catholic position, and prepared to notify his neighbor of his own good will in this matter.

To our non-Catholic friends, I shall say only this: You have a battle on your hands. And you have an obligation of leadership in this battle. In the defense of released-time against further attacks, you have a primary interest; our task can only be to cooperate in support of you. Moreover, in the general attack coming from many quarters against the genuine American concept of freedom *of* religion, which aims to substitute the destructive concept of freedom *from* religion, you again have a primary interest; for you are—here I mean Protestants—the largest religious force and the most powerful in this country. You boast of your primary contribution to the formation of American culture as a religious culture; then you cannot shrink from primary responsibility for the defense of this heritage. If the myth of democracy as a religion is triumphant, and achieves its "establishment" as our national religion, the triumph will be over you. Your God will have been supplanted by an idol. It is, then, for you to locate your enemy and measure his power. You will find that he is our enemy, too. And that discovery will be important for all of us. FT

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Tolerance As Catholic Doctrine

Derek Cross

"Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves," wrote Abraham Lincoln. Is there any American of sound mind who would not endorse this statement? Yet things having to do with freedom are not always so clear. The crucial case of religious freedom, celebrated by Pope John Paul II as the "cornerstone of the structure of human rights," a "point of reference" and "measure" of the other fundamental rights, has not, for instance, always found the ready support of papal authority.

Pope Pius VII called the principle of religious liberty a "disastrous and ever-to-be-deplored heresy"; Pope Gregory XVI condemned it as "insanity"; and Pope Pius IX called it "a monstrous error," "most pernicious to the Catholic Church and to the salvation of souls," "the liberty of perdition," which will "corrupt the morals and minds of the people," and which propagates "the pest of indifferentism." He reprimanded those who, "contrary to the teaching of Holy Scripture and the Fathers, deliberately affirm that the best form of government is that in which no obligation is recognized in the civil power to punish, with specific penalties, the violators of the Catholic religion, save insofar as the public peace demands." Pope Leo XIII called it "contrary to reason," "a public crime," tantamount to "atheism, however it may differ from its name." This is, to say the least, a weighty list of dissenters. What then are we to make of the issue?

In the Church's past, religious toleration *as a practice* was occasionally prescribed, but *as a principle* it was never affirmed. While it was not obligatory for a Catholic politician to invoke the use of force against non-Catholics, circumstances might well suggest the advisability of silencing one whose dissidence threatened society. Various penalties might be imposed, not excluding exile and execution. St. Thomas Aquinas takes up the relevant considerations in the *Summa Theologiae*, II-II. In qu. 10, art. 10, Thomas asks whether infidels can be allowed to govern the faithful. He answers that an established Catholic authority ought not to be ceded to infidels, but that an infidel authority already in force might be maintained. However, there is no necessity in the latter case: the Church has the right to do away with the dominion of unbelievers, and if she forbears to exercise this right, owing to the fear of scandal, it is a right she nonetheless retains. In art. 11, Thomas asks whether the rites of infidels are to be tolerated. In answer, he recalls the principle that "those who are in authority rightly tolerate certain evils lest certain goods be lost or certain greater evils be incurred." However, the rites of unbelievers "which are neither truthful nor profitable are by no means to be tolerated." And in qu. 11, art. 3, he asks whether heretics are to be tolerated. To this he answers that the heretic himself deserves only excommunication and death. However, the Church is also on the side of mercy, and does not condemn immediately (as strict justice would require) but only after two admonitions, according to the direction of the Apostle.

Pope Leo XIII, instigator of the Thomistic revival, inserts himself into this line of Catholic tradition in his encyclical of 1885, *Immortale Dei*, on the Christian Constitution of States. Here we read: "God alone is the true and supreme Lord of the world. Everything, without exception, must be subject to Him, and must serve Him, so that whosoever holds the right to govern holds it from one sole and single source, namely God, the Sovereign Ruler of all." The encyclical argues that because the state's authority comes from God, it must be exercised in conformity to the law of God,

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and the state accordingly should publicly profess and favor the true religion. Rationalism and naturalism, which deny the authority of God and His Church, give rise to serious errors, among them a new conception of rights at variance with natural law, maintaining that all men "are equal in the control of their life . . . that each is free to think on every subject just as he may choose, and to do whatever he may like to do. . . ."

Leo XIII returns to the subject of modern liberties in his encyclical of 1888, *Libertas*, on the Nature of Human Liberty. Specifically with regard to religious liberty, he notes that reason forbids the state "to adopt a line of action which would end in godlessness—namely to treat the various religions (as they call them) alike, and to bestow upon them promiscuously equal rights and privileges." Just as we might expect from our brief dip into the *Summa*, Leo affirms that a Catholic state has the right but not the obligation to restrict the public expression of non-Catholic religions. Toleration is in order only in cases where repression would bring about a greater evil.

The Declaration on Religious Freedom of Vatican II, *Dignitatis Humanae*, as we know, cast all this in a new light. In Article 2 we read: "This Vatican Synod declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. This freedom means that all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or social groups and of any human power, in such wise that in matters religious no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs. Nor is anyone to be restrained from acting in accordance with his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits. This Synod further declares that the right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person, as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself." By this declaration the council guarantees, in effect, the natural right to teach and practice any fundamentally decent form of religion in the public forum. We have moved from the right of the public authorities to repress religious errors, subject to the maintenance of the common good, to the universal right of individuals to profess any religion whatever subject to "due limits," which limits the council later identifies as "public order."

The council's declaration was warmly received in both the Catholic and the non-Catholic world. Many had desired a conciliar endorsement of religious freedom, even if they did not see how it could easily be reconciled with tradition. In the department of sober second thoughts, however, it would be well to attend to the recent work of Stanley Hauerwas, a well-known Methodist theologian formerly of Notre Dame, who argues in his new book, *After Christendom? How the Church is to behave if freedom, justice, and a Christian nation are bad ideas*, that "freedom of religion is a subtle temptation": a temptation and therefore to be resisted, but a subtle one, likely to slip by undetected in the liberal state.

The very theologian whose writings most paved the way for the promulgation of *Dignitatis Humanae*, the American Jesuit John Courtney Murray, admitted the apparent gap between this document and the Catholic tradition: "The course of the development between the *Syllabus of Errors* (1864) and *Dignitatis Humanae Personae* (1965) still remains to be explained by theologians." The French Dominican Yves Congar pronounced his gloss with a Thomistic accent: "It cannot be denied that a text like this does *materially* say something different from the *Syllabus* of 1864, and even almost the opposite of propositions 15 and 77-79 of the document."

Perhaps most interesting of all was an interview with Hans Küng. "I think [Archbishop Lefebvre] is wrong," Küng said—no news there—"but nevertheless what he's arguing are theoretically unresolved questions. Lefebvre has every right to question the Council's Declaration on Religious Freedom because Vatican II completely reversed Vatican I's position without explanation." Archbishop Lefebvre's notoriety in this country stems chiefly from his opposition to the new order of Mass, but the French Archbishop was at least as exercised about the question of the newfound right to religious liberty. For the record, in an intervention at the Council, he suggested the following conclusion for the chapter on religious liberty: "For the very dignity of the human person, error must be repressed to prevent it from spreading, unless a greater evil can be foreseen from its repression than from its toleration." One must admire Lefebvre's adroit use of the argument from human dignity; it should at the very least make us cautious in our handling of this now favored trope in Catholic social doctrine.

Archbishop Lefebvre found another unlikely admirer in the person of Allan Bloom, author of *The Closing of the American Mind*. Many, especially in the Catholic press, noted that Bloom was blind to the place of religion in public life. But Bloom's silence may have been conceived as an act of kindness to his Christian readers. Some years before his book was published, Bloom executed a dry run of its themes in an interview with a student paper in Toronto. There he said that the theological-political problem had historically involved the most urgent inquiries of the most profound thinkers, but that today all had been given over to the skeptics. A generation ago, Bloom said, the entire Church thought like Archbishop Lefeb-

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vre, but now he is only one man, alone. An early modern political philosopher once boasted, "We are preparing an euthanasia for religion." Possibly Allan Bloom thinks the Church in her absent-mindedness has finally swallowed the fatal draft.

Allan Bloom's concerns impel one to turn to the origins of religious freedom in modern liberal political theory, especially the work of Hobbes and Spinoza. All the early liberal thinkers exhibit in various ways the common strategy of first deconstructing traditional religion to make way for their new science of politics and then reconstructing it as a civil religion so the politics thus elaborated can operate in actuality. (This complex two-fold scheme has given rise to much of the difficulty in reconstructing the actual relation between faith and reason, religion and secularism, in the early modern thinkers. Not only is it necessary to distinguish the tactical role any given affirmation plays in their overall scheme, but allowances must be made for a prudential reticence in the deconstruction and a conciliatory obfuscation in the reconstructive moment.)

It is sometimes said that early liberal thinkers were compelled to invent their novel political doctrines owing to the worldly corruption and inflammatory politics in the churches of the time. Indeed, the era of the European religious wars was bloody and unsettling. Leibniz, for one, underscored the irony of the situation in the title of his essay, "Mars Christianissimus"—Most Christian War God. Some good souls would like to believe that if only there had been more evidence of charity and forbearance among the professed followers of Christ, if only there had been more lived Christian idealism, there would have arisen no need to invoke a secular solution with its neutral state. This is partly true, but not the whole story. For it is very clear that the early liberals objected not just to the political *practice* of the ancients and medievals but to their political ideals as well. In fact it was largely owing to false ideals that traditional political practice was found wanting.

Francis Bacon put it this way: the discourses of the ancients are beautiful like the stars, which give little light because they are so high. Traditional political philosophy was ineffective because of its exalted notion of virtue and of polities instrumental to the formation of virtue. According to the ancients, the bare individual as we first encounter him is incomplete. He can reach the promise of his potential only by developing the moral and political virtues exercised by living among others of his kind, and further by the acquisition of the intellectual virtues and the assimilation to God through prayer, the sacraments, and the imitation of Christ. The natural law and the divine law hold out a pattern for human aspiration and a measure for their success or failure. Such goals were, at best, too demanding and at worst (as Machiavelli proclaimed) imaginary. In this impossible situation, an effective politics could follow only from a kind of sixteenth-century "grade inflation." Forget about virtue and its formation, lower your goals, accept and exploit the passions that move most men most of the time: pleasure, comfort, acquisitiveness, and fear. According to the moderns, the individual man as we encounter him is already morally complete: nature supplies rights for his execution, rather than intimating laws or goals for his perfection.

For Hobbes, the pivotal passion in his new political scheme was fear—fear of violent death. Apart from political society, living in the state of nature, all men have a right to whatever they can acquire. It is obvious that our rights may conflict—you and I both want the same pineapple—and equally obvious that we may come to blows over disputed rights claims. No man is strong enough or vigilant enough to secure his life against his neighbors. Life in the state of nature is a war of "all against all" in which man's life is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Fear, the master passion, leads men to devise a social contract: "I authorize and give up my right of governing myself to this man, or to this assembly of men, on this condition; that thou give up thy right to him, and authorize all his actions in like manner. This done, the multitude so united in one person is called a Commonwealth." Thus are peace, comfort, and security—the goals of political society—assured.

One problem remains: the necessary authority of the sovereign over his subjects, based on their fear of violent death in the state of nature, is threatened by a passion yet more powerful than the fear of violent death—the fear of spirits, of hellfire, or of God. Thus do those who claim to be able to avert the wrath of God obtain an authority surpassing that of the political sovereign. This subversive rivalry threatens Hobbes' entire construction, and nearly half of the *Leviathan* is devoted to its resolution. Hobbes proposes a new biblical interpretation that would give the civil authority complete control of all religious practice and instruction—no right to religious freedom here. However, at one point he mentions the possibility that the sovereign might refrain from establishing an official state religion and permit all religions that are not seditious.

This brief suggestion supplies the material for Spinoza's invention of religious toleration. For Spinoza, such toleration is the only way to secure the goals for which men left the state of nature and entered political society. In actuality Spinoza agrees with Hobbes that the sovereign must control the practice of religion. However, he takes issue with Hobbes regarding the proper method for the sovereign to achieve this control. Ironically enough,

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Hobbes' mistake was in seeking to tackle this problem directly, in contravention of his overall strategy. Remember that the modern solution to the political problem was to utilize and redirect irrational passions, rather than attempt to extirpate them or subordinate them to a higher goal. Spinoza proposes, by instituting freedom of speech and religion, to use religion to counteract religion. His psychology leads him to predict that toleration of all religious beliefs will lead eventually to the dilution of religion, as men come to emphasize the tenets they hold in common and downplay the peculiarities of their own particular form of religion. An ecumenism of indifference is the product, and religion is effectively defanged thereby. Freedom of religion enjoined by the sovereign lends him a greater authority over religion than he could ever hope to gain by attempting direct control. Spinoza, then, can add freedom to the list of the goals of political society, along with peace, comfort, and security. It is an ambiguous freedom.

This contingent freedom of liberalism is inherently manipulable and necessarily cuts a poor figure next to that essential freedom which is freedom over the passions, freedom from corruption and death, freedom to behold the face of Being, in short, the very sort of difficult ideal the founders of liberalism sought to expunge from the record of human striving forever. It should also be noted that in Spinoza's construction religious freedom is indeed the "first freedom," even if the rationale for this primacy is not as edifying as one might wish.

With the religiously subversive modern project in mind, we can appreciate why the pre-Vatican II popes took the line they did. They may not have understood all the nuances and possibilities inherent in classical liberalism, but they clearly saw that Spinoza's universal toleration and the new natural rights teaching at its basis constituted nothing less than a declaration of war. And looking around us now, it must be granted that a larger part of what Spinoza planned for has come to pass. However, need we accept the original liberal assessment of the human situation?

Pope John Paul II, in his daring appropriation of liberal economics and rights language, thinks not. He is well aware of the fundamental role of the passions in the logic of liberalism. This is acknowledged in *Centesimus Annus*, and he is most careful to give the passions their due, especially as motors of economic life. Beyond the passions and their play, however, what remains for him is intellect in the classical sense, reason that is not merely ministerial to the passions but capable of holding hegemonic sway and attaining its own proper goal. If religion and morality are not illusions bred upon the passions, but rooted in the very being of the human spirit, they may not be as readily channeled as Spinoza and Hobbes require. The blood of the martyrs has not run dry. There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in Hobbesian philosophy.

Moreover, parallel to this ontological or intellectual query about the ultimate success of Spinoza's strategy, we ought to consider a practical objection as well. It is arguable that the doctrines of the early modern philosophers are not all of a piece, that besides the cosmological and metaphysical aspects of their systems there is a purely practical starting point that relies on no antecedent theoretical knowledge. The impetus for the discourse of rights is not a deduction from some theory of the world and man, but a political response to encroachment on human individuality. The metaphysically neutral, political determination of rights discourse, then, entails no predetermined ontological limitations and should not commit us to any predictions unproved in practice. Political liberalism is not an exclusive truth read directly off from nature, but a practical proposition in the making. Perhaps, after all, religion will not counteract religion, religion will not wither away. Perhaps, as Tocqueville noted of America, religion will show itself an ally of freedom rather than its victim.

Need we then believe—as Allan Bloom seems to do—that relinquishing the support of the political establishment deprives religion of its essential foundation in reality? Another skeptical philosopher, Karl Löwith, once noted that the "Christian world has come to an end. This does not mean that a faith which once conquered the world perishes with its last secular manifestations. For how should the Christian pilgrimage *in hoc saeculo* ever become homeless in the land where it has never been at home?"

Return now to the issue of fairness, as articulated by Mr. Lincoln. Using the new rights paradigm of political discourse, with morally preformed individual actors claiming equal rights in the face of others, I think the traditional doctrine of the Church can only appear to be unfair. The Church claims rights for itself that it is not prepared to guarantee to others. Frankly, it is not a good bet that anyone will make a social contract on those terms. The traditional doctrine assumes a much less offensive face, however, when it is conceptualized according to the natural law approach in terms of duties enjoined by the teleological perfection of the person. In this light, a privileged position for the Church is not claimed as a discriminatory favor—on behalf of this actual community against that—but rather places *all* persons under the imperative to sanctity as it is made available by the Church. Being Catholic, then, becomes less a badge of identity than a vocation to communion.

In adopting a "mitigated rights paradigm," Pope

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John Paul II does not restate the traditional doctrine of the sacral regime in terms of rights, as Leo XIII had done; he accepts the right to religious freedom as the just consequence of the new language. Has he been bewitched by words? Why should the Church embrace the liberal rights language, in however mitigated a form? It does not appear to be of Christian inspiration or a necessary development of theological doctrine. Could one not continue to nourish the beautiful dream of a sacral regime, at least as a lost cause or a Platonic city in speech? The answer is that the Pope's shift to a quasi-liberal rights doctrine has to be seen as an act of high prudence, a courageous and necessary response to "the signs of the times."

In both National Socialism and Communism, lands once Christian descried the face of Lucifer; Nazism and Communism rejected moderate liberalism and culminated in unspeakable acts of inhumanity and terror. Loathing remains the only decent human response to them; nevertheless, we do well to remember that both these attempts to solve the political problem on a non-liberal basis were not without their own persuasive power. It suffices to mention the names of Heidegger and Lukacs as certifiable non-imbeciles who linked their destinies to these radical critiques of politics. Christendom is dead and can no longer serve as a rallying point against the foe.

The modern world is awash in the sea of contingency—not least those parts of it that seek to ground "absolutes" or "values" in mere acts of assertion or historical fate. No community in the Western world is composed preponderantly of those with sufficient spiritual perception to discern the ontological difference between principles safeguarded by the magisterium of the Church and simple political ideology. Most people instinctively believe that all affirmations terminate in the subjectivity of the affirmer. Ask any college freshman. For him freedom is likely to mean only the contingent freedom to choose among the bright pictures momentarily flashing upon the screen of one's perception. Confronting the vista opened by the Catholic tradition, this contingent freedom seems not much different from imprisonment.

In these circumstances, any attempt to insist on the principles of the sacral regime can only be counterproductive. The sacral regime will appear to be an ideology, and insistent preaching of an apparent ideology will strengthen the vise-like grip of ideology overall. If you wish, it is a mark of our corruption that essential freedom can no longer be supported by appropriate structures of a sacral regime. However, the liberal rights doctrine, especially in the moderate, Anglo-Saxon form of the Founders and in the mitigated Catholic form developed by John Paul II, can uphold circumstantial freedom so that essential freedom will at least not be foreclosed. Circumstantial freedom in the modern age must be jealously guarded against cultural and political manipulation: the allure of materialist ideologies and the overweening power of the state.

Regarding the very important question of the apparent breach between *Dignitatis Humanae* and the Catholic tradition, though some work has recently been done, no explanation has yet emerged that carries universal conviction. There are four possibilities: (1) the tradition only seemingly contradicts Vatican II, which has in fact clarified the tradition; (2) the tradition only seemingly contradicts Vatican II, which is, rather, clarified *by* the tradition; (3) the tradition indeed contradicts Vatican II, but the tradition is not binding; (4) the tradition indeed contradicts Vatican II, but Vatican II is not binding (the Lefebvre position). Since this exercise must be carried on largely in the realm of logic with the aid of subtle formal distinctions, there is an aspect of sterility to the whole proceeding, however important, and it is easy to see how one might prefer to take the quickest way by affirming either (3) or (4), a simple rejection of one of the putative contradictories. In any case, even if it can be established that there is no logical contradiction, the question remains how the new point of departure was divined and why it was judged opportune to propose it.

Pope John Paul II's stand in defense of religious liberty has been forthright. He spoke in defense of *Dignitatis Humanae* at the Council, he included a special appendix on this declaration in his book presenting Vatican II to the Polish people, he preached religious freedom to the Communists in Poland, and he has repeatedly returned to this topic as Supreme Pontiff. Most recently, in his encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, commemorating Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, he included a little-noticed paragraph on the right to religious freedom. However, he has not insisted on any continuity between the sacral regime with its natural law (still favored by Leo XIII) and the fundamental right of religious liberty taught by Vatican II. Surely the reason is that he recognizes that the paradigms of natural law and natural right are discrepant. Leo XIII tried to subsume modern natural rights talk within the tradition of natural law with unhappy results for religious freedom: "error has no rights." John Paul II sets aside the natural law paradigm and offers a practical Catholic interpretation of the rights and dignity of the person. This is less a development of doctrine—"development," after all, does not mean an "about face"—than a shift of paradigm. Archbishop Lefebvre's insistence on the traditional thesis that religious tolerance can only be prudential and not principled is very nearly correct. However, for John Paul II it is the entire

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rights paradigm that is adopted on prudential grounds, not the temporary toleration of a given non-Catholic regime. Hence the appearance—and indeed, the reality—of novelty.

In *Centesimus Annus*, moreover, Pope John Paul II enriches the account of mitigated liberalism with a "parallel" approach to religious freedom drawn directly from Christian experience and practice. This approach is of the greatest interest because it proposes a positive link between Catholic tradition in Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* and the declaration of Vatican II.

In paragraph 9 of *Centesimus*, John Paul II says of Leo XIII's intentions:

> The pope wished to proclaim [the right to discharge freely one's religious duties] within the context of the other rights and duties of workers, notwithstanding the general opinion, even in his day, that such questions pertained exclusively to an individual's private life. He affirms the need for Sunday rest so that people may turn their thoughts to heavenly things and to the worship which they owe to Almighty God. No one can take away this human right, which is based on a commandment; in the words of the Pope: "no man may with impunity violate that human dignity which God himself treats with great reverence," and consequently, the State must guarantee to the worker the exercise of this freedom.

John Paul then supplements the text with his own *lectio plenior*:

> It would not be mistaken to see in this clear statement a springboard for the principle of the right to religious freedom, which was to become the subject of many solemn international declarations and conventions, as well as of the Second Vatican Council's well-known Declaration and of my own repeated teaching.

In *Rerum Novarum*, Leo XIII mentions the Sunday rest on two occasions: first in paragraph 32, in the context of the duties of employers—"it is the duty of employers to see that the worker is free for adequate periods to attend to his religious obligations"—and later more extensively in paragraph 58, dealing with the things that the power of the state should protect. In *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II quotes from paragraph 57 of *Rerum Novarum*, a passage offering a rationale for the prescriptions of paragraph 58:

> In the case of the worker, there are many things which the power of the State should protect; and, first of all, the goods of his soul. For however good and desirable mortal life may be, yet it is not the ultimate goal for which we are born, but a road only and a means for perfecting, through knowledge of truth and love of good, the life of the soul. The soul bears the express image and likeness of God, and there resides in it that sovereignty through the medium of which man has been bidden to rule all created nature below him and to make all lands and all seas serve his interests. "Fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air and all living creatures that move upon the earth." In this respect all men are equal, and there is no difference between rich and poor, between masters and servants, between rulers and subjects: "For there is the same Lord of all." No one may with impunity outrage the dignity of man, which God Himself treats with great reverence, nor impede his course to that level of perfection which accords with eternal life in heaven. Nay, more, in this connection a man cannot even by his own free choice allow himself to be treated in a way inconsistent with his nature, and suffer his soul to be enslaved; for there is no question here of rights belonging to man, but of duties owed to God, which are to be religiously observed.

This passage can be read as an extended transposition of the themes of liberal political philosophy into the key of traditional natural law teaching. Just as the liberal state is instituted to secure the good of the body in its natural life, the Christian state should protect the good of the soul. Mortal life is desirable, but securing its continuance is not the *summum bonum*. It is in virtue of the soul that Leo justifies man's sovereignty over nature. It is, *contra* Hobbes, the potentiality of the soul rather than the vulnerability of the body that confers equality on all men. The unfettered pursuit of happiness in the acquisition of material property is transmuted into the unimpeded pursuit of the perfection of the soul. Just as natural rights are inalienable, so man by nature cannot allow his soul to be enslaved. All this, Leo affirms, is *not* a matter of rights, but rather a duty owed to God.

While Leo clearly chooses to underline the contrast between the natural law paradigm of Christian philosophy and the natural rights paradigm of classical liberalism, the implicit parallelism can also be used to point up similarities. This seems to be the method that gives rise to John Paul II's mitigated liberalism. John Paul II rarely mentions natural law but peppers his discourses with appeals to rights. Leo XIII briefly refers to "the dignity of man," but for John Paul II human dignity becomes foundational. John Paul seems to reverse Leo's strategy with regard to liberal themes, recommending appropriation or conversion in place of

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confrontation.

Here is paragraph 58 of *Rerum Novarum* on the Sunday rest:

> Hence follows necessary cessation from toil and work on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. Let no one, however, understand this in the sense of greater indulgence of idle leisure, and much less in the sense of that kind of cessation from work, such as many desire, which encourages vice and promotes wasteful spending of money, but solely in the sense of a repose from labor made sacred by religion. Rest combined with religion calls man away from toil and the business of daily life to admonish him to pay his just and due homage to the Eternal Deity. This is especially the nature, and this the cause of the rest to be taken on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, and God has sanctioned the same in the Old Testament by a special law: "Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath Day," and He Himself taught it by His own action: namely the mystical rest taken immediately after He had created man: "He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done."

Leo has begun to sketch a theology of the Sabbath in this section. It could be supplemented from the Jewish perspective by the very beautiful book of Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man*, and from a Catholic patristic perspective by the musings of Jean Danielou, S.J., on the mystery of "the eighth day" [the octave or ogdoad] in *The Bible and the Liturgy*. Danielou's thought is well summarized by Alexander Schmemann:

> Having fulfilled the mystery of salvation, having recreated in Himself man and the world, having rested on the blessed Sabbath, Christ rose again from the dead on the "first day after Sabbath." On that day a *new time* began which—though externally it remains within the "old" time of this world and is still measured by the number seven . . . [is] experienced . . . [by the Church] as the *eighth day*—the one beyond time, beyond seven, beyond "this world"—as her participation in the "day without evening" of the Kingdom. . . . Just as the Church though "not of this world" is present in this world for its salvation, so also the Sacrament of the Lord's Day, the Sacrament of the new aeon is joined with time in order that time itself might become the time of the Church, the time of salvation . . . the starting point, as indeed the foundation of Christian mission and action in the world.

If we deepen our understanding of the dynamic relation between this world and the next, we will gain an important clue to other dualisms, such as church and state, religion and politics, authority and freedom. Recurrence to the Sabbath rest following the lines of *Rerum Novarum* thus presents us with a fertile new suggestion for developing an argument for religious freedom, an argument both parallel to and supplementary of the argument from human rights that is so problematic.

Let me briefly identify several benefits of this new approach. It could, first, represent a genuine development of the tradition and not a repudiation of it. The Church has always defended the Sabbath rest. If religious freedom can be linked to this defense its cause gains stability and a rationale. Moreover, it is an argument that starts from a communal base, the working class, and does not pit individual against individual or attempt to reconstitute a community out of atomic individuals. Next, it bears upon public recognition and public action and is neither relegated to nor derived from the realm of private opinion.

Beyond all this, the metaphor for separation contained in the Sabbath rest is temporal not spatial. Thus, the Church retains the potential for dynamic action in the world and is not imprisoned either by a "wall of separation" (secularist) or a "hortus conclusus" (spiritualist). A temporal symbol of separation well accords with the patristic *symphonia* of church and state; music is the temporal art *par excellence*. And finally, the metaphor of the "eighth day" signifies an ontological reality (Eucharastic life) and not a bare logical possibility or a utilitarian calculus (a negative right).

The argument is inherently pluralistic rather than bearing upon univocally conceived rights. That is, Leo defends the Christian Sunday observance, but the same considerations could apply analogously to the Jewish Sabbath, the Muslim Friday observance, and even the nonbeliever's "natural day of rest." Each community would articulate its own mode of freedom from the world of liberalism; one does not commit the absurdity of requiring a religious tradition without a church to affirm the "separation of church and state."

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Review Essay

On the Death of Literature

Carol Iannone

THE DEATH OF LITERATURE. By ALVIN KERNAN. *Yale University Press. 240 pp. $22.50 cloth, $10 paper.*

Those who began to study literature before the radicalization of the university in the 1970s learned that literary criticism was not only a valid undertaking in itself but a way to understand the larger culture and, indeed, the human condition in general. For a time, it seemed that just as much of the greatest of Russian thought had been delivered through the novel form, so mid-twentieth-century American literary criticism had become a vehicle for the most important ideas of the age. A number of elements contributed to this: a cultural atmosphere, generated at least partly by the seriousness of modernism, which demanded respect for the work of art; a kind of technical proficiency developed by the New Criticism which made close reading seem an almost endlessly rewarding endeavor (even if some critics went beyond its provenance); the lingering presence of such major artists as Eliot, Yeats, Stevens, Faulkner, and if you were so inclined, even William Carlos Williams (not to mention the great European moderns); and the vitalizing example of critics like Edmund Wilson, Lionel Trilling, Northrop Frye, R. P. Blackmur, Cleanth Brooks, Philip Rahv, and Eliot himself.

While, admittedly, the idolatrous view of literature that underlay this picture may have been in need of some qualification, who could have predicted that in twenty or so years we would be witnessing the actual disintegration of our literary culture and the very real possibility of losing at least for a time a portion of our cultural heritage? Writers as different in political outlook as Orwell and Pound once inspired readers with their insistence on the apodictic importance of the written word and the literary act. Nowadays the conditions for appreciating great literature seem to be disappearing. Current criticism alternates between saying that literature is nothing but an indeterminate linguistic structure or that it reveals the sex, class, race, and other hierarchical biases of the author—which, of course, the critic is charged with exposing. It can be startling to discover the extent to which questions of race, class, and sex have become not only the central *intellectual* inquiries but the leading *emotive* inquiries as well, that is, the only way for many students to feel an arousal of the sentiments in confronting a work of art.

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Alvin Kernan's *The Death of Literature*, now in paper, was perhaps the first book entirely and systematically devoted to detailing the extent of the damage that has been done. Significantly, however, Kernan does not base his analysis on a typically traditional or conservative point of view. His thesis is that deconstructive criticism and the politicization of literary judgment are only the final blows that literature has sustained in the past century or so, and he carefully distances himself from both sides of the controversy raging over criticism today: "The death of literature looks like the twilight of the gods to conservatives or the fall of the Bastille of high culture to radicals, but my argument is . . . that we are watching the complex transformation of a social institution in a time of radical political, technological, and social change."

Kernan discusses a number of factors in this transformation, such as the passage from print to electronic communication, but while he makes some valid points, they don't necessarily lead to the conclusions he draws. That we are passing from a print to an electronic age, for example, does not, in and of itself, necessarily mean the "death of literature"; certain skills can remain even as new dispensations take over. (Not to be frivolous, but even the hi-tech *Star Trek* portrays Klingons and humans discussing Shakespeare in outer space.)

Likewise, it is true, as Kernan amusingly demonstrates, that the *Lady Chatterley's Lover* obscenity case revealed an alarming softness in the literary ground even before deconstruction, as expert after expert testifying in defense of the book was unable to render a convincing or cohesive definition of literature. But their confusion, in the courtroom and out, could be seen as a function of a modernism ever eager to push back the frontiers of what is permissible in art.

On the whole—an impression strengthened by his bland manner of presentation—Kernan seems not to realize that he can easily be seen to be making a case precisely for the anti-literary forces. For instead of offering an impassioned defense of literature against the assault from the deconstructionists, he agrees, rather, that they have succeeded.

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> Older humanistic views like [Virginia] Woolf's about the integrity of the literary work and its ineradicable meaning, about the creative imagination of the authors of literature and the perfection of the created artifact, about the great tradition of literary masterpieces and the long line of imitation and influence, all beliefs which were alive and intellectually potent only yesterday, have disappeared as completely as if they had been vaporized. . . . Deconstruction swept literature before it, and even if its moment too is passing, as seems the case, it has rearranged the literary world, though not much else, so completely as to make it unlikely that there will ever be a return to the humanistic and positivist assumptions that once supported romantic and modernist literature.

Understandably, supporters of literature like Wendy Steiner, who reviewed the book in the *Times Literary Supplement*, and Norman Fruman, writing in *Academic Questions*—both of whom found Kernan part of the problem, not part of the solution—might have expected him to defend such "humanistic views" of literature as Woolf's, even if with some modification; instead he agrees that they are no longer tenable. But Kernan feels he has offered his own solution: he would establish literature instead as a social construct. In a letter of protest to Wendy Steiner's remark in the *TLS* that instead of Kernan's "fairy tale of intellectual history" we need a "humanism worth the name," Kernan, agreeing that we need a "humanism worth the name," insists:

> Only when literature is seen in its full social context rather than in aesthetic or ideological isolation will the needed new humanism appear. Only when we understand that literature can disappear from culture and consciousness will the dangers stand out of "hermeneutics of suspicion" that tell us that the great books have no meaning, that they advocate sexist hegemony, that they are the tools of cultural imperialism, and the many other militant criticisms that pursue social causes by trashing literature. Only when we understand that literature has a history, and a fairly short one, will it be clear how important it is in these parlous times for all book-centered activities to say plausible and positive things about literature once again.

Kernan's defense is thus a curious one, the implications of which he seems not to recognize. For it is precisely the view of literature as nothing more than a social construct that has enabled its enemies to deconstruct it. Kernan seems to think that if people would just understand how delicate and fragile literature has turned out to be, how susceptible to evisceration, they will agree to protect it like an endangered species. But again, it is precisely literature's fragility that has afforded its detractors such joy in their labors. In his would-be rational and sensible way, Kernan imagines that, once the messy, unreliable, mystifying literary notions have been stripped away, people will be more logical and realistic and begin "to say plausible and positive things about literature once again." In this regard Kernan is being a bit like C. S. Lewis' "men without chests" who imagine that they can save by reason what they have uprooted from the heart and the sentiments.

But where will these "plausible and positive things" come from? From taking thought? Either literature is based on some truth about the human condition or it is not. If it is, it should be defended on that ground. If not, we may as well throw it all in right now, because we're only chattering against the inevitably approaching void. If literature is primarily a social construct, why then *should* it survive the social arrangements that gave rise to it?

Nor is it only in what he says that Kernan gives aid and comfort to the enemy but in the very way he says it. Deconstruction has become so aggressive a mode of thought today that one can succumb to it almost without recognizing it; a lot of the time Kernan sounds more like a postmodern, deconstructed man than the distinguished traditional scholar that he is. By exploring various literary paradigms, exposing their shortcomings, and implying that nothing lay behind them but a contemporaneously agreed upon collection of beliefs, he becomes himself an example of what he's describing.

True, in his discussion of Paul de Man, the late godfather of deconstruction, the exposure of whose past as an anti-Semitic propagandist for a Nazi paper in Belgium recently created an enormous scandal, Kernan has no difficulty in being firm: he stands appalled before both de Man's anti-Semitic pronouncements and the dishonest and caviling apologias of his deconstructionist colleagues. "The de Man case," he says, "removes deconstruction from the realm of pure intellect and puts the theory, protesting and wriggling, in a full living context. It confronts deconstruction with the monstrous and passionately felt *fact* of the Holocaust and asks, is this too only a *text*? Can its meaning be endlessly deferred? Can it too be interpreted in any way deemed suitable?" Kernan laments that in today's textualized universe, increasingly distanced from reality, the answer could well be "yes."

This discussion marks a kind of high point in the book. One would think that it should have

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marked some kind of turning point for the author as well, transforming him from a too scrupulously detached observer into a "man with a chest," an impassioned defender of the literary act, like Solzhenitsyn, say, someone who by the power of his soul, his convictions, his experience, makes us see and feel the vital importance of literature to humanity. But no, Kernan's ultimate message is a lukewarm call "to say plausible and positive things."

Kernan's book may represent something we will be seeing more of in the future, as battle-fatigued critics and teachers of literature struggle, perhaps less and less successfully, to summon up the force of soul necessary to recapture a sense of our fading literary glories. Another example of someone whose solution turns out to be more of the problem is Gerald Graff, perhaps the most sophisticated purveyor of the newer critical "theories." Graff argues that the new theories have been grossly misunderstood and vulgarized by hostile critics and he insists that theory can actually revitalize literary study.

After first harshly opposing the new literary trends, Graff tells us in a recent piece in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, he came to embrace them "in spite of myself," a telling phrase, suggesting once again how hard it can be to resist the deconstructive tide. Graff's solution to the standoff in literary studies today is to "teach the conflict," and in his *Chronicle* article he shows how he has done this with a single work, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. His former way of reading the Conrad work was "as a profound meditation on a universal moral theme . . . as a universal parable of the precarious status of civilized reason in a world too confident it has outgrown the seductions of the primitive and the irrational." But such a reading, Graff was instructed by recent theory, "depended on my not seeing certain things or not treating them as worth thinking about," such as "the fact that Conrad sets the novella in the Congo in the high period of European colonialism or that he chooses subjugated black Africans to represent . . . primitive irrational forces."

Traditional criticism was hardly blind to the social context of Conrad's work, as Graff seems to imply. Be that as it may, it was a famous, overexcited—and overcited—essay on *Heart of Darkness* by the African novelist Chinua Achebe that helped clue Graff in. This essay is just about the worst thing that Achebe ever wrote, and in any other time it would probably have been dismissed as a tendentious diatribe. As it is, since it involves an African writer leveling a charge of racism against a Western work, our progressive critics now happily surrender. (Interestingly, Achebe, too, tells of a "conversion" regarding *Heart of Darkness*. When he first read it in his college days, he said in an interview some time ago, he saw himself in Marlow, the main narrator, the man of civilization coming upon nineteenth-century Africa for the first time; but then with the raised racial consciousness of more recent times, he identified himself with the primitive Africans Conrad portrays. In this we witness one of the little deaths of the literary imagination that theory has helped bring about: individuals can no longer read freely but feel forcibly constrained by theory—the real hegemony today—to identify with literary characters who share sex, race, class, etc.)

It is true that the novella contains passages that are offensive by current standards of sensitivity on race, but Achebe deliberately takes these descriptions out of context and denies Conrad the larger balance his work achieves. And when Achebe talks about Conrad's using primitive Africa to show Europe "in a state of spiritual grace," he is no longer reading the words on the page.

Ironically, Graff agrees that Achebe ignores Conrad's own powerful critique of racism and imperialism, but this is apparently not enough to neutralize Achebe's indictment. For Achebe's accusation of racism renders an open wound that can be bled semester after semester by Graff, the teacher of the conflict, in deference to current sensibilities. The "truth and justice" that Graff claims to be serving are just words since he makes no effort to arrive at a considered conclusion. What is most significant about his approach, then, is the way its deconstructed, decentered, putatively uncommitted manner allows for the promotion of politically correct opinion. (Would Graff be as concerned with an article denouncing Conrad's harsh portrayal of Belgians?)

Furthermore, Graff's method implicitly denies the importance of the dialectic within Western culture itself. After all, the West produced both colonialism and the critique of colonialism—the very critique that is at the heart of *Heart of Darkness*. The Graff-Achebe approach implies that the West is blind to its own faults and that an alternative African point of view must be sought to register balance. To this end, in addition to Achebe's essay, Graff assigns his novel of tribal Africa, *Things Fall Apart*. It is true that this novel presents a view of the workable, orderly tribal life of the nineteenth-century Africa that Conrad as an outsider was not privy to, but two things should be kept in mind: first, the extent to which Achebe's novel, written in English, its title taken from Yeats, its subject matter informed by the individualistic concerns of the genre and colored by the tragic tenor of Western thought, is actually a part of the Western tradition itself. And second, Graff's explanation of why he had formerly overlooked the racial content of *Heart of Darkness*—namely, "That Conrad chose black Africa to rep-

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resent primitive impulse was, I thought, incidental to his main intention, which was to make a statement about the human condition that transcends mere matters of geography and race"—seems to imply that there was in fact nothing in Africa at the time that might have appeared primitive or exotic to a European. Thus as it turns out, it is politically correct thinking that carries no dialectic, no corrective to itself, and launches accusations of racism as if there were no objective reality to consult and everything were entirely a matter of perception.

In the end, the battle to save literature will not be won by "saying plausible and positive things," nor by capitulating to the assault by "teaching the conflict." It will be won by taking a stand for the power and truth of the literary experience, even with its shortcomings, and by insisting on the vitality of its connection to the human soul.

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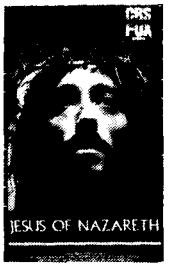

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Books In Review

An Incredible Lightness of Being

Intellectual Memoirs, 1936-1938. By Mary McCarthy. *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 114 pp. $15.95.*

Reviewed by **Midge Decter**

The novelist and critic Mary McCarthy, who died in 1989, was up to the time of her death working on a memoir of her life in the late 1930s, in effect a sequel to her two previous autobiographical works, *Memoirs of a Catholic Girlhood* and *How I Grew*. Perhaps she meant by the end to have offered up the story of her entire life. It is a story that if honestly told would have taken many turns, literary and historical as well as personal, and would have included among its *dramatis personae* some of the most fascinating minds of twentieth-century America. Be that as it may, she left behind only a few brief chapters—not even so much the beginning of, as notes toward, a longer work—covering the years 1936-38 and published under the title *Intellectual Memoirs*.

The years from 1936 to 1938 were, to be sure, eventful, one might even say formative, ones in Mary McCarthy's own life as well as in that of the New York literary bohemian community of which she had by the time covered in this book come to be a member. For her, this period was among other things the interregnum between her first marriage, entered into in 1933 when she was twenty-one and fresh out of Vassar, and her somewhat hasty—and, she would have us believe, blindly undertaken—second marriage to Edmund Wilson, by then an important literary celebrity. This was also the time that witnessed the commencement of her serious career as a writer and critic, and with it, of a whole group of new friendships that would, after her idiosyncratic fashion, be lifelong ones. Figures like James T. Farrell, Dwight Macdonald, F. W. Dupee, William Phillips, Philip Rahv, and others—most of whom would one day be collectively identified as the "*Partisan Review* crowd" and as such would until the onset of that cultural swing called the sixties exert a very special kind and degree of literary influence—turn up in McCarthy's life as mentors, sponsors, and playmates.

For that crowd—and indeed, for every writer and thinker touched by the leftist or liberal ethos of the time—the years covered in these memoirs were a period of fateful and far-reaching political schism, one that would continue to have profound political and cultural consequences for the next half-century. A little over-simply put, this was a split between the Stalinists and their fellow travelers on the one side and the anti-Stalinists on the other. The immediate occasion for this split was the Moscow show trials, which while not the first, were the most directly visible evidence to that date that the Soviet regime had become a murderous dictatorship. There would be a mounting collection of such occasions down through the years, each bringing its own new cohort of anti-Communist intellectuals, but the basic terms of this political battle were being laid down at the moment McCarthy is writing of here. Moreover, the battle extended far beyond the province of mere politics, for people's capacity to deny the evidence about the nature of Soviet Communism went to the heart of their relation to everything else—art, literature, life itself.

Mary McCarthy, by her own account someone floating more or less recreationally in the waters of literary leftism (the book opens with her memory of marching arm in arm with her lover of the moment in the Communists' May Day parade shouting "Fellow workers, join our ranks!" and, in her words, "having fun") was almost acciden-

Midge Decter *is Distinguished Fellow at the Institute on Religion and Public Life and a member of the Editorial Board of* First Things.

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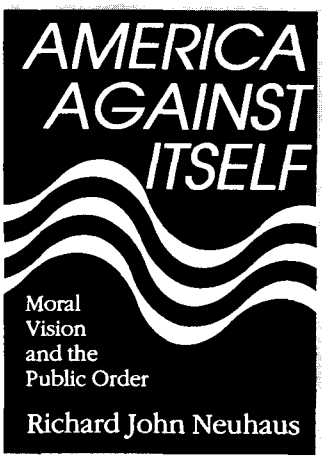

Partly autobiographical and thoroughly challenging, *America Against Itself* is an in-depth analysis of the pervasive cultural warfare that threatens to undermine the American social structure. Richard John Neuhaus, author of *The Naked Public Square*, tackles the abortion debate, the urban underclass, and the nature of altruism in a world that rewards uncaring. In addition, Neuhaus reflects on his role in "The Movement" of the 1960s. $19.95 cloth

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tally to find herself one day in the anti-Stalinist camp. Her name had without her permission been added to the list of signatories to a petition to secure a fair hearing for Stalin's arch-enemy Leon Trotsky, and when Communist friends began in their well-known style to hector her and demand that she have her name taken off the list, she dug in her heels and refused. Thus had she made what she describes as "*the* pivotal decision of my life."

Pivotal indeed, at least in the near term, for the anti-Stalinists were then and for a long time to come far outnumbered and outpowered among the American literati. Indeed, not until the end of World War II would McCarthy and her friends move beyond coterie status and find their rightful place of prominence in the literary sun.

If floating is the word for her youthful relation to politics, it is doubly so for her relation to sex. The period between her first two marriages seems also to have been devoted to a serious bout of totally unserious bed-hopping. She refers in passing to having slept with this one and that one and the other one, and mentions on one occasion having had three assignations in a single day. Some of this undertaking to compile a sexual record was clearly *de rigueur* for all the women of bohemia: sleeping around was after all the first, and in those years still meaningful, and at the same time possibly least strenuous, way to *épater le bourgeoisie*. But in her particular case, the intense lightness of it all sounds not so much conventionally bohemian as affectlessly compulsive.

AND IF IT is possible to characterize her account of becoming an anti-Stalinist as one of having tripped into it, how would one characterize her account of agreeing to marry Edmund Wilson? When she met Wilson, she tells us, she had only recently settled down into being seriously in love, as well as keeping house, with Philip Rahv, the young Russian-Jewish immigrant with a fierce will and intelligence who was co-editor of *Partisan Review* (for which she had become the theater critic). She spent two evenings with Wilson, on both occasions drunk; and during the second, in his house in Connecticut, she somehow found herself making love to him on the couch. Soon after, he began to press her to marry him. She was young, vital, beautiful, and brilliant, and he was deeply lonely. And though her heart still belonged to Rahv, so she claims, and after a certain amount of dithering pro and con, she agreed. Why? After half a century, she can still only guess. Not for money, she says; Wilson didn't have that much. Perhaps because Wilson offered intellectual attractions that were beyond Rahv's capacity—"we were going to read Juvenal together, for example." Furthermore, she loved the country, as did Wilson, and Rahv was incorrigibly urban. Finally, she thinks she has found the explanation: "It was the same old class struggle Philip and I had been waging from the moment we fell in love. Wilson, relatively speaking, was upper class."

It is typical of the heroines in Mary McCarthy's novels, who are always and quite undisguisedly she, that they own up "honestly" to some sin or bad motive in order to conceal a truer failing. In the case of her marriage to Wilson, which had already turned ugly by the wedding night and would remain so for the seven years of its duration, she cheerfully confesses to the role played by snobbery and flatly denies that played by literary ambition. Among the inducements offered her by an importunate Wilson, she tells us, is that he would do something for her as a writer. Rahv would only keep her doing criticism, said Wilson (at which, be it noted, she was even at so early an age quite masterful), whereas he believed in her talent for "imaginative" writing (which would in the event turn out to be small and given to an altogether uncreative mean-spiritedness). Though it is true that without Wilson "I would not be the 'Mary McCarthy' you are now reading," she says, at the time she was not at all moved by the thought of what Wilson might do for her: "It seemed mercenary."

The very inappositeness of this particular adjective when the issue was that of furthering her literary career, especially for so careful and highly polished a craftsman of words, sets off a small moral smoke alarm—the very same alarm as provides a steady accompaniment to the reading of her novels.

SO, THEN, SHE was from early on an anti-Communist, but please don't, dear reader, take it too seriously. She was for a time wildly promiscuous, but don't imagine that it had the slightest effect on her. She married a man who attracted her very little yet promised her much, but don't for a moment suppose that she had any responsibility for the ensuing dissonance of their life together. The mental maneuver involved in such evasions is handily served by an almost unbelievably impressive memory for detail. Meals, wines, cocktails, games of bridge and poker, dresses, hats, decor—all are given equal weight with events in the world and affairs of the heart and/or mind. How on earth, the reader is over and over given to wondering, could a woman in her late seventies, who had seen so much and done so much, been in so many places, known so many people, dig out of her mind's file the little white lamp bought in Macy's or the tall cocktail shaker designed by Russell Wright or the color of her bedspread in her studio on Gay Street? The author of these memoirs is a woman who has clearly spent a great deal of energy making sure that no one and nothing either escapes her or on the other hand acquires too burdensome a presence in her psyche.

In that sense the book, sketchy as it is, teaches us a great deal about her. Few people have been more malicious about their friends, especially in print—indeed, one of the works that established her as a writer of fiction was a novella called *The Oasis*, in which the very Philip

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Rahv whom she loved and betrayed is caricatured so brutally that when it was published, strong men gasped. Yet we can see now that what impelled her in that book was not so much a real feeling of malice as an ungovernable carelessness, in the radical sense of the word. So, too, when the 1960s came along and the world was once again, as it had been in McCarthy's 1930s, treated to the sight of young people without a care having themselves some old leftist-style "fun," nothing of her earlier political commitment inhibited her from finding her own way to join in. She went off to North Vietnam, where the really big kids went to play, and returned with an almost scandalously mindless book about the war, about the ugliness of the Americans and the virtues of the North Vietnamese, that was even more an intellectual than a political betrayal of what she had once been thought to stand for.

But there can be no betrayal, neither of the personal nor the political nor the intellectual kind, where there is no loyalty. And there can be no real loyalty where nothing counts for more than anything else. Brief as it is, this book displays great zest, along with suggestions of a high wit and brightness. But to value these qualities too highly is to indulge a childish, as W. H. Auden once put it, "taste for sweets"; when life and art both came to demand more of Mary McCarthy, such wit and brightness sadly proved too light to bear the freight.

The Argument From Design

THE MIND OF GOD. By PAUL DAVIES. *Simon & Schuster. 254 pp. $22.*

Reviewed by **John Farrell**

"I HAVE ALWAYS thought it curious that, while most scientists claim to eschew religion, it actually dominates their thoughts more than it does the clergy." So said celebrated astronomer and atheist Fred Hoyle.

With this quote, physicist Paul Davies concludes his latest book on new developments in theoretical physics. As both the title and his own musings throughout the book make clear, Davies has no trouble admitting that religion and its subject, namely, the Creator, occupy him in more than passing fashion. And his book suggests that scientists should address the obvious metaphysical implications of twentieth-century physics: e.g., Einstein and quantum mechanics and the more recent developments in the field of chaos theory and nonlinear systems.

The book's title, *The Mind of God,* was taken from a well-known story about Einstein, who, when asked why he became a physicist, answered that he wanted to read the

JOHN FARRELL *is a writer living in Massachusetts with special interest in scientific subjects.*

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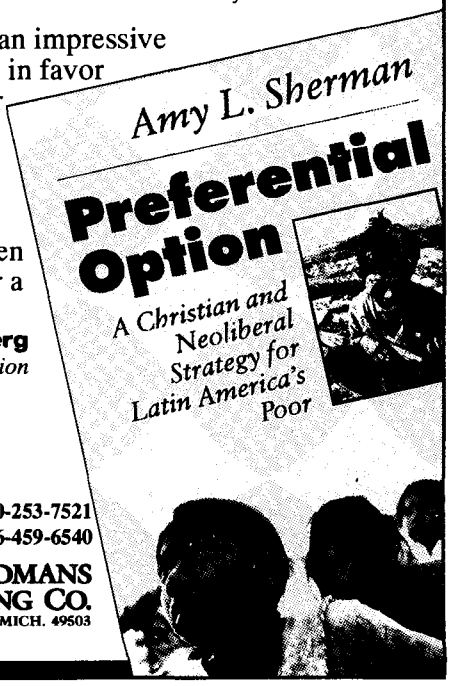

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mind of God. This might seem to have been a symptom of great hubris, but Einstein is after all to be forgiven for it because it wasn't questions of theology that occupied him so much as questions of design. ("I have to add the last point explicitly," he once wrote to his friend M. Solovine, "lest you think that, weakened by age, I have fallen into the hands of priests.")

In these days of rival grand theories—superstrings, the inflationary model, et al.—competing on the front pages of the *Wall Street Journal* for the status of last word on the ultimate, Davies' book might appear to be just another technician's confident assertion that science will soon have all the answers. On the contrary: *The Mind of God* is rather a reappraisal of reductionism (its sweeping generalizations about the nonexistence of things like the mind and the soul) and a most refreshing if also sober assessment of the limits of mathematics and the physical theories it supports.

True, Davies, a professor of mathematical physics at the University of Adelaide in Australia, isn't always easy to read. The non-physicist may have to spend time scrutinizing a diagram or scale model of the universe to keep up with Davies as he demonstrates the work of Mandelbrot or Feigenbaum's constants. But unlike such other popularizers of scientific issues as Carl Sagan and Stephen Hawking, he does avoid either talking down to his readers or succumbing to adolescent exclamation points at the mere sight of numbers requiring scientific notation.

DAVIES IS MORE interested in what lurks behind the numbers—the fact, for instance, that mathematics should consistently tell us so much about the physical world at all. While this fact is perhaps too often taken for granted, Davies makes no attempt to hide his certainty that all ballyhooed attempts to find a Grand Unified Theory of Everything are to some extent self-defeating precisely because of the quite inexplicable, indeed mysterious, effectiveness of mathematics in explaining events in the physical world. "Mathematics must be founded on a set of axioms," he writes. "Though the theorems of mathematics may be deduced from within the system of axioms, the axioms themselves cannot. . . . There is also the serious problem of Gödel's Theorem. Recall that, according to this theorem, it is generally impossible, from within the set of axioms, even to prove that the axioms are consistent." Thus Gödel's Theorems of Incompleteness continue to haunt reductionists, and Davies is one of the outspoken scientists who would remind his colleagues that they must at some point come to terms with mystery.

A convinced Platonist, at least with regard to the existence of mathematical laws, Davies rejects the cultural view of mathematics merely as a language created by man to describe the natural world; and like his colleague Roger Penrose (one of the foremost theoreticians on black holes) he flatly asserts that mathematical laws have an existence of their own:

> First, much of the mathematics that is so spectacularly effective in physical theory was worked out as an abstract exercise by pure mathematicians long before it was applied to the real world. . . . The British mathematician G. H. Hardy wrote that he practiced mathematics for its beauty, not for its practical value . . . and yet we discover, often years afterward, that nature is playing by the very same mathematical rules that these pure mathematicians have already formulated.

This is not to suggest that Davies is deeply theological in his thinking. He professes no specific religious creed, although it is remarkable how closely his own ruminations about a necessary creator resemble the classic demonstrations of Thomas Aquinas. If indeed Davies paraphrases the angelic doctor too liberally in places, unlike many other science writers of prominence he has not confused the Thomist distinction between the possibility of an infinite series—which Aquinas contended no philosopher had ever succeeded in disproving—and the possibility of an infinite regression of causes—which Thomas ruled out.

Davies is acutely aware that twentieth-century physics has rejuvenated a host of philosophical questions once considered in bad taste; this may in fact be the best thing about his work. (Harvard physicist Sidney Coleman commented that twenty years ago if you mentioned quantum mechanics at a cocktail party, everyone would leave the room.) In any discussion of modern physics, especially as it relates to religion and metaphysical questions, there are a few things that can now be asserted with clarity and confidence; it often seems that not since the thirteenth century have religion and science so well complemented each other.

EINSTEIN'S Special and General Theories of Relativity restored the universe, indeed the very idea of the universe as a whole, to the realm of intellectual respectability in the twentieth century. Some cranky conservatives seem for the wrong reasons to be overly loyal to Isaac Newton and to feel that Einstein, by asserting the strange bendability of space and time, somehow violated the sanctity of the cosmos. This is unfortunate because they don't realize the influence of Kant on cosmology and philosophy. For a century and more after Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, the universe was dismissed as an "illusion," a bastard product of the metaphysical cravings of the intellect and so to be ignored. A number of scientists, notably Stanley L. Jaki, have documented the unfortunate influence exerted by Newton's mechanistic cosmos on the German philosopher. In fairness to Newton, it seems that Kant hadn't really read the entire *Principia*, and was hard-pressed to understand what little of it he did read. He was more taken with the idea of applying purely physical principles to philosophical questions, questions in the end he decided weren't even legitimate.

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When Einstein finished his tensor equations for the General Theory of Relativity in 1916, Kant and his *Critique* became the first casualties—along with infinite space, infinite time, and the other vague notions so cherished by nineteenth-century reductionists. And in rapid succession during the 1920s and 1930s the world awakened not only to the fact that the universe was a finite though unbounded reality, but also to the realization that it was expanding, with the frightening implications of its own beginning staring up from the equations over which the physicists were brooding.

At the same time, determinists were reeling from evidence on the atomic level that reality was becoming unpredictable, dissolving into a shower of particles that seemed to alternate between being particles and being waves, and to alternate between one energy level and another instantaneously. Today, quantum mechanics and chaos theory are revealing a world more creative and unpredictable than ever.

Chaos theory is specifically the study of initially simple systems—as simple as a leaking faucet or a swinging pendulum, or as complex and huge as the red storm on Jupiter—which can rapidly assume unpredictable properties that expand beyond the capacity of mathematics to determine. Among other things, Davies feels that more and more the study of chaos is forcing a reappraisal of reductionism in physics, its shrinking role in science as a whole, and the liberating implications this has for the role of, yes, teleology in physics and biology.

This is good news for several reasons. For one thing, unlike physicists and mathematicians, Darwinists have been getting away with decidedly unrigorous theories about the evolution of man—usually hiding behind vague assertions about chance and random mutations while staunchly refusing to allow any kind of teleological impulses to creep into the history of natural selection. Chaos and self-organization in non-organic systems, however, now promise to change all that. (Davies has described these developments in his other books, most notably *The Cosmic Blueprint* and *The Matter Myth*.)

All this makes Davies' one lapse all the more surprising, and that is a careless repetition of one of the most irritating scientific clichés: namely, that given an infinite amount of time, even a monkey will type out the works of Shakespeare. The absurdity of this slip on his part is all the more baffling since Davies has taken such pains to dispel the evasions of the early Darwinists, now that fractals, chaos, and autocatalysis offer such superior mechanisms for the progress of evolution. What is so irritating about the notion that given enough time anything can happen is that what can happen is glibly assumed to be *everything*. Only a moment's sober reflection will show this to be ridiculous, especially since Davies himself has gone to such lengths to describe how modern cosmologists believe the universe was created, not in time but with time. In addition, the irreversibility of physical processes contradicts such a possibility (not to speak, in this specific case, of the insult to Shakespeare).

Nevertheless, *The Mind of God*, and Professor Davies' work as a whole, provide a most welcome antidote to such comfortably superficial—and perhaps on that account best-selling—offerings of the very popular Messrs. Sagan and Hawking.

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Denomination And Church

EVANGELICAL REUNION: DENOMINATIONS AND THE BODY OF CHRIST. By JOHN M. FRAME. *Baker Book House. 185 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by **Peter J. Leithart**

PROTESTANT EVANGELICALISM, it seems, has a symbiotic relationship with American denominationalism. Evangelicals trace their deepest roots to the Protestant Reformation, which was, among other things, a church split. In America, experiential revivalism and disestablishment have combined to liquidate churchliness and encourage sectarianism.

A growing number of evangelicals, however, oppose the denominational system on evangelical grounds. In his irenic jeremiad, John M. Frame, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Westminster Seminary, indicts denominationalism as an unbiblical perversion that has done untold harm to the American Church. Frame's charges are serious and far-reaching. Denominationalism undermines the practice of church discipline, he argues, which was for many of the Reformers essential to the health of the Church. Under the regime of denominationalism, a person disciplined by one congregation is often welcomed into a neighboring congregation. If two congregations belong to different denominations, there are no common procedures for resolving conflicts, nor are there common church judicatories to which appeals might be made.

Moreover, it has long been remarked that denominations tend to be socio-economically weighted, a situation, Frame points out, that produces an imbalance of spiritual gifts among them. One denomination instructs its tiny band of stalwarts in an impressively subtle system of doctrine, while another preaches the ABCs to millions. In addition, denominationalism distorts priorities, as time, talent, and energy are expended in promoting the "home team" rather than in building the Church as a whole.

Worst of all, the disunity of the Body compromises her witness to her Head. Denominationalism was not Jesus' vision for His Church. On the contrary, the overwhelming emphasis of the New Testament is on the unity of the Church. Frame rejects the readily offered solution of reducing the Church's unity to an invisible, "spiritual" one. On the contrary, he says, the Church's unity should be expressed in doctrine, practice, government, and in mutual aid and support. It must, as Jesus Himself desired, be a public unity, a unity evident to the world (John 17:23).

FRAME THUS ECHOES Carl Henry's plea: "Somehow, let's get together." Much of *Evangelical Reunion* is devoted to laying the theological groundwork for the "how" part of that "somehow." Frame argues that a bounded toleration of diverse views and practices is not a necessary evil but is actually implied by Scripture. He devotes chapters to how differences in doctrine, practice, government, and priorities might be addressed.

As one would expect from a Calvinist evangelical, Frame's diagnosis and prescriptions are forthrightly biblical and theological: he makes an unabashedly evangelical case for evangelical reunion. One of his chief strategies is to suggest that the Bible is itself less specific in many areas than denominational partisans are willing to admit. He spends several pages arguing that, if the main biblical teachings on Church government are carefully observed, "the practical differences between presbyterianism, congregationalism, and episcopacy would be very small."

In urging limited tolerance of doctrinal differences, Frame employs the notion of "multiperspectivalism" developed at length in his magisterial 1987 study, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God.* For Frame and his colleagues at Westminster Seminary, "multiperspectivalism" does not mean a recourse to relativism, but provides instead a way of grasping and articulating the many-sided richness of truth. Frame has argued, for example, that each of the Ten Commandments can be seen as a perspective on the whole of Christian ethics; each commandment assumes and implies the others. Idolatry, as the prophets told Israel, is unfaithfulness to the Divine Covenant Husband and thus is a violation of the seventh as well as of the first commandment. Such prophetic imagery is not, in Frame's view, merely metaphorical; instead, it points to the profound unity and interconnectedness of God's law.

Frame's "multiperspectivalism" in theology directly affects his churchmanship. He suggests that "some doctrinal differences are the result of two parties coming to the scriptural text from different perspectives." He notes that both Calvinists and Arminians, arch-enemies since the seventeenth century, are seeking to affirm important truths; Calvinists stress, as the prophet Jonah put it, that "salvation is of the Lord," while Arminians wish to insist that sinners must respond to the Gospel in faith. Frame evaluates Calvinist and Arminian preaching and concludes, Calvinist though he is, that some Arminian preaching may be more biblical than some Calvinist preaching.

If a plea for ecumenism seems oddly dated to veteran ecumenists, it should be remembered that ecumenism is heady stuff in evangelical circles—at least as heady as Thomas Oden's heretical talk about "orthodoxy" is in certain ecumenical circles. Early on, the twentieth century was announced as the century of the Church, while the latter decades have, irony of ironies, witnessed the resurgence of evangelicalism. If Frame's book receives the reading it deserves, perhaps the century will end with a welcome marriage of evangelical theology and the ecumenical spirit.

PETER J. LEITHART *is Pastor of Reformed Heritage Presbyterian Church in Alabaster, Alabama.*

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The Wonders of Ordinary Language

Wittgenstein on Ethics and Religious Belief. By Cyril Barrett, S.J. *Blackwell. 285 pp. $44.95.*

Reviewed by **Edward T. Oakes**

As is well known, teachers are often in the habit of giving pop quizzes, and I indulge the habit here. Quick, who said the following? "Ordinary language . . . is the only language in which we can be sure of really grasping the phenomena." Even people who have only a passing acquaintance with the trends of contemporary philosophy would be likely to guess Ludwig Wittgenstein as the author of this dictum, for who else in the twentieth century is more noted for elevating the status of ordinary language to the privileged rank of becoming *the* major object of philosophical reflection? But in fact, the author is none other than the physicist Werner Heisenberg, discoverer of the famous Uncertainty Principle and perhaps the one most responsible for radically disengaging our sense of ordinary reality from the world studied by physics: "We cannot describe atomic phenomena without ambiguity in any ordinary language," he says. And yet it is in the same lecture that he concedes that the final recourse even for the scientist will always be the medium of ordinary language.

Perhaps it is this ineluctable reality that accounts for the extraordinary influence of Ludwig Wittgenstein in the world of contemporary thought. For strange as our world might seem when studied through the lens of physics, it nonetheless immediately strikes us, first of all, as *our* world, the place that for good or ill we must call home. And language, ordinary language, the language we learn so unselfconsciously from infancy, is the very medium of access to that world.

Edward T. Oakes, S.J., *teaches in the Religious Studies Program at New York University.*

But as Heisenberg so startlingly showed, there lurks within this world a reality that must send the world of understanding mediated by ordinary language into a tailspin. And this must mean that in some way ordinary language, and the common sense that it reflects, hides within itself enigmas that, with proper reflection, can be teased out to reveal a world previously unsuspected by us in our unreflective moments.

Any careful student of Wittgenstein's thought must sooner or later experience how extraordinarily laborious is the process of concentrating on ordinary language as the privileged locale for philosophy. Toward the end of his life, Wittgenstein traveled to Cornell for a series of lectures and private discussions with the faculty, one of whom recalled later: "Under the relentless probing and pushing of his enquiry, my head felt almost as if it were ready to burst. There was no quarter given—no sliding off the topic when it became difficult. I was absolutely exhausted when we concluded the discussion."

For this reason, I think we are singularly lucky to have before us this fine study of Wittgenstein by Cyril Barrett, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Warwick. The book hardly absolves one from the labor required in order to understand Wittgenstein—that would be a betrayal, not an interpretation of the man—but it sets forth with admirable clarity the full range of his interests and lays to rest once and for all the hoary notion that a concentration on ordinary language represents a comedown for philosophy from its previously exalted heights of metaphysics and Platonic speculation.

It is true that Wittgenstein was a member, albeit a wary one, of the Vienna Circle, a band of logical positivists intensely hostile to metaphysics and to what they regarded as the pretensions of Hegelian idealism, and from whom A. J. Ayer drew his inspiration in his highly influential essay *Language, Truth, and Logic*. Few were the minds untouched by Ayer's infuriatingly well-written polemic against the validity of any nonempirical statement regarding either aesthetics, ethics, or religion. No sooner was it written, however, than the school of logical positivism collapsed from its innate

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inability to justify its foundational principle of strict empiricism on the empirical grounds demanded by that principle.

Out of that failure came the turn to ordinary language analysis; but this school has in many ways never outgrown the suspicion toward metaphysics and all other forms of transcendent statement that it inherited from its predecessor, logical positivism. Thus one will find in the literature of this movement analysis of such burning questions as how the quantifiers "any" and "all" are not interchangeable ("any doctor will tell you that" versus "all doctors must take out malpractice insurance"). Something of a degeneration, one might think, from the glory days of Plato's Academy—or even the Berlin lecture hall of Hegel.

But as Barrett shows in luminous detail, this characterization of ordinary language analysis, at least as it applies to Wittgenstein, is a caricature. On the contrary, the reader can clearly see the sheer intensity that the great philosopher brought to all his reflections on religion. (No wonder, one says to oneself, that his colleagues felt exhausted.) Indeed, Barrett's book leads to the speculation that Wittgenstein will one day be known by historians of philosophy as this century's closest analogue to Blaise Pascal—a dimension of him, by the way, that was completely missed in his disciple Ayer's own book about him.

Oddly enough, the twentieth-century thinker that Wittgenstein most reminds one of is Karl Barth (a comparison Barrett himself most convincingly draws). This is particularly evident in Wittgenstein's remark about the role of reason and argument in the mind of a believer, a point that nearly exactly transcribes Barth's view of Anselm:

> A proof of God's existence ought really to be something by means of which one could convince oneself that God exists. But I think what *believers* who have furnished such proofs have wanted to do is to give their belief an intellectual analysis and foundation, although they themselves would never have come to believe as a result of such proofs.

This is an astute insight, and one that no doubt stems from Wittgenstein's sharp sense of how arguments actually function within a linguistic world. And it helps to illustrate how his concentration on the everyday world of language in no way muffles the metaphysical and religious sensibility that permeates the human soul. On the contrary, in Wittgenstein's case, linguistic analysis has provided access to insights into the nature of faith and ethical behavior that rival any other achievement of our century. One is reminded on this point of an extraordinary passage from Pascal on the nature of faith:

> If [Christ] did not rise from the dead, then he decomposed in the grave like any other man. *He is dead and decomposed.* In that case he is a teacher like any other and can no longer *help*. So we have to content ourselves with wisdom and speculation. But if I am REALLY to be saved, what I need is *certainty*—not wisdom, dreams, or speculation—and this certainty is faith. And faith is what is needed by my *heart*, my *soul*, not by my speculative intelligence. For it is my soul with its passions, as it were with its flesh and blood, that has to be saved, not my abstract mind. Perhaps we can say: only *love* can believe the Resurrection.

In this passage we can find the foreshadowing of Pascal's true twentieth-century peer, the famous recluse of Cambridge.

The Pope and King Zog

THE COLUMBIA HISTORY OF EASTERN EUROPE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. Edited by JOSEPH HELD. *Columbia University Press. 435 pp. $29.95*

Reviewed by **George Weigel**

TOWARD THE END of this collection of essays, Professor Iván Völgyes gently chastises his brethren in the history and political science confraternities for the fact that "all too frequently . . . many of us in our profession . . . made compromises with the Communist regimes" of the old Warsaw Pact. It is a welcome confession, but playing games with the Communist managers of the academic research and exchange *apparat* is merely one of the failures with which Professor Völgyes and his legions of American and European colleagues have to contend these days. Indeed, if this handsomely printed and bound volume is any indicator, Eastern European studies in much of the Western academy has moved from the intensive care unit to the hospice, and the death watch is now being mounted.

The problem is not (as sometimes asserted) that Western scholars of Central and Eastern Europe and the USSR failed to anticipate the rapidity of the Communist crack-up. No one, not even the people on the ground, predicted that. The problem is that many, perhaps most, of our academic scriveners remain sublimely oblivious to the ways in which their secularist-positivist assumptions about man and society, their soft-Marxist notions of the relationship between economics and politics, and their enthrallment to "methodology" (as understood by empiricist social science) have blinded them to the deeper realities of the phenomena they are describing and analyzing.

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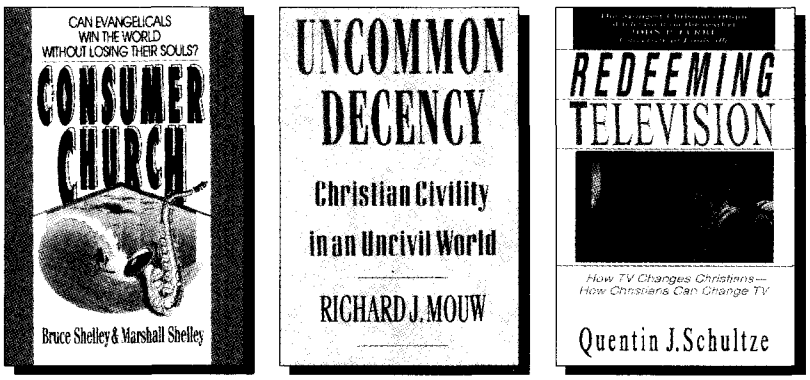
To begin with the most obvious example: In the *Columbia History*'s 400 pages, there is virtually no grappling with Communism as an ideology, indeed as an ersatz religion. Nor do the authors (all doubtless distinguished scholars within their fields) describe in any detail the effects of Communism on the moral-cultural texture of Central and Eastern European societies. Nor do they analyze the complex patterns of acquiescence and resistance that formed the dialectic of political life in the Communist culture of the lie. Major dissident texts, including seminal works by Adam Michnik and Václav Havel that decisively shaped the politics of 1989, are strikingly absent from the bibliography, which "represents those sources the contributors to this collection have relied on most heavily."

Little wonder, then, that these essays barely mention, let alone attempt to explain, the widespread conviction among the people who made the Revolution of 1989 that a moral revolution—the reconstitution of civil society—was the necessary antecedent to the political overthrow of the Yalta imperial system. (Astonishingly enough, and in what is, on balance, one of the more thoughtful essays in the book, there is no serious analysis of the role of the Catholic Church in the rise of Solidarity and the collapse of Polish Communism. To illustrate the tone-deafness another way: Pope John Paul II has one entry in the book's index; King Zog of Albania has nine. Here is secularism reduced to self-parody.)

THEN THERE ARE the volume's problems of tone, which in fact embody the analytic flaws most characteristic of this kind of political "science." Take, for example, the ways in which scholarly "neutrality" and "objectivity," misconstrued, serve the ends of obfuscation in dealing with the linguistic ecology of Communist societies. As most sensible people with any experience of Communism recognized long ago, the pervasive use of the language of euphemism was one of the more repulsive characteristics of the culture of the lie in Communist Central and Eastern Europe. What has been less remarked is the way in which euphemism's seepage into the *lingua franca* of Western political science and international relations theory has systematically distorted the reality of the situations being investigated.

Thus Professor Sharon Wolchick describes what some would once have called the "correlation of forces" in postwar Czechoslovakia in these gelded terms: "From the beginning of the post-World War II period, however, the Communist party enjoyed certain advantages over its democratic opponents. These included the . . . presence of the Red Army." (An "advantage" indeed!) Then we are informed that Czecho-

CULTURE WATCHERS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slovakia's Communist rulers, after seizing power, "stepped up" their "efforts to discredit and reduce the power bases of non-Communist actors. . . . This process . . . included the political use of judicial and propaganda campaigns against leaders of other parties." (Among the unnoted refinements of those "efforts" and "campaigns" were a ubiquitous and fearsome secret police apparatus; judicial murders under trumped-up charges of treason; and the widespread use of concentration camps, prison camps, and slave labor camps, including the notorious uranium mine pits in Bohemia to which numerous Catholic clergy and lay activists were consigned.) Professor Wolchick does report that the Czechoslovak Communists "mounted a concerted campaign against religion" and that the number of priests in the country was "reduced"; that these "reductions" were effected by brutalitarian means is wholly unremarked.

And so it goes. Why did the Prague Spring of 1968 and its attempts at reform Communism fail? Because Alexander Dubček couldn't reassure Czechoslovakia's "external allies" that things wouldn't get out of hand. Did everybody in Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia sign on to the post-Dubček program of Communist "normalization" enforced by Gustáv Husák? We are told that "many groups in the population continued to hold values at odds with those of the leadership." What about the mass purge that followed the collapse of the Prague Spring? Well, the universities suffered because of the "personnel changes made at this time." The examples could be repeated virtually ad infinitum (and certainly ad nauseam). Whether it was deliberate or, more likely, unwitting, the adoption of the Communist language of euphemism by Western political scientists in the name of a scholarly "objectivity" that transcended the "Cold War mentality" not only masked the full squalor of life within the Communist web of mendacity; it obscured (or just plain missed) the heroism and the political impact of those who steadfastly chose to "live in the truth," as Havel described the moral resistance movement that ultimately made possible the political overthrow of Communism.

Given the aridity of this kind of analysis, one begins to grasp what Artur Miedzyrzecki, a Polish poet of the resistance, meant when he mourned the vacuities of the Western poli-sci world in these winsome terms:

What does the political scientist know?
The political scientist knows
the latest trends
The current states of affairs
The history of doctrines

What does the political scientist not know?
The political scientist
doesn't know about
desperation
He doesn't know the game
that consists
Of renouncing the game

It doesn't occur to him
That no one knows when
Irrevocable changes may
appear
Like an ice-flow's sudden
cracks

And that the natural
resources
Include knowledge of the
venerated laws
Ability to wonder
And a sense of humor.

Some years ago, a young American social historian told Gertrude Himmelfarb that he and those of his methodological persuasion could not "get to" the American Revolution from their painstaking research into late-eighteenth-century New England life. In a similar way, although because of different methodological biases, the authors of the *Columbia History of Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century* cannot really "get to" the most important event in the history of Central and Eastern Europe in the twentieth century: the Revolution of 1989, which restored Central and Eastern Europe to Europe. That would seem an analytic failure of rather gigantic proportions. It might even be thought to require some serious critique of the ideological assumptions and scholarly procedures that produce such garbled and frequently misleading results.

The *Columbia History* begins with a detailed and useful chronology of political life in the region from 1918 through 1990. The failure of this book—a failure common to the academic guilds that produce such books—is that the essays that follow the chronology do so little to illuminate it.

Remembering Some Of the Answers

THE DISUNITING OF AMERICA: REFLECTIONS ON A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY. By ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, JR. *Norton. 160 pp. $14.95.*

Reviewed by **Peter L. Welsh**

THE VICIOUS RIOTS that took place last spring in the South-Central section of Los Angeles may be taken as a tragic reminder of the need for all Americans continually to evaluate the unique character of ethnic relations in this country. Such relations clearly remain fragile and, indeed, represent possibly the greatest challenge to the health and vigor of the American polity. As Ross Perot commented shortly after the riots, "We've just split the melting pot. . . . As a country we will lose if we let the melting pot break again and again and again." It is with this enduring problem in mind that one might turn hopefully to Arthur Schlesinger's latest book, *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*, a short, discursive tract that sets out to examine the unique nature, some current criticism, and the future preservation of what the author calls, among other things, American culture.

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In writing this book, Schlesinger has put himself at the center of a highly volatile debate over education and ethnic relations in America. Moreover, as conservatives are all too well aware, this debate is one that is not infrequently marked by varying forms of intimidation and coercion—sometimes violent—with unfortunate consequences for those who find themselves on the wrong side. Schlesinger publicly entered this fray last year when, as the most prominent liberal member of a New York State committee for curriculum development (the Sobol Committee), he steadfastly refused to endorse the committee's recommended multicultural curriculum for primary and secondary education. At that time, he was attacked for his criticism of the state's curriculum in particular, and the attacks continued as long as he was inclined to speak out in general against what he saw as a corrosive force in contemporary American education. It took a good deal of courage, then, for Schlesinger to step up his opposition to multiculturalism by publishing *The Disuniting of America*; and those who stand opposed with him may rightly commend his stand against the multiculturalist orthodoxy. At the same time, however, they will want to keep several things in mind as they consider, along with Schlesinger's critique of multiculturalism, his concurrent analysis of the American polity.

The Disuniting of America begins and ends with thoughts about the fundamentals of the critique of multiculturalism: considerations of what is uniquely excellent about American culture, how it came to be, why it has come under attack, and why and how we should preserve it. Although one might think these questions the heart of the matter, for Schlesinger they seem to be peripheral. Between the beginning and the end he spends a great deal of time summarizing and attacking various forms of "therapeutic" history, particularly the movement known as Afrocentrism. These middle chapters, offering up many gems as they do, for the most part merely express a historian's disappointment at the dilution of his profession by charlatans and shoddy scholarship. Moreover, they add little of importance beyond, for example, Dinesh D'Souza's account of this phenomenon in his *Illiberal Education*.

What Schlesinger calls American culture refers to America's unique, "brilliant solution for the inherent fragility of a multiethnic society: the creation of a brand new national identity, carried forward by individuals who in forsaking old loyalties and joining to make new lives, melted away ethnic differences." The idea of such a common culture, of a melting pot, has been promoted by many great figures throughout the country's history and Schlesinger invokes such men—including Emer-

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son, W. E. B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, Martin Luther King, and, yes, Herman Melville—frequently during the course of his book. Each provides a slightly different account of the same phenomenon. More important, though, is the question of *how* ethnic differences were "melted away" in America. What, in other words, is it in the American regime that has uniquely facilitated this extraordinary process?

Citing Tocqueville and others, Schlesinger attributes this ability to form "one from many" to the democratic process, "the exercise of political rights and civic responsibilities bestowed on 'new immigrants' by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution." By exercising such rights, he says, these immigrants were "indoctrinated . . . in the fundamentals of the American creed." They were, in other words, through steady participation in civic life, *habituated* to think of themselves as Americans.

This account, however, is far from adequate in explaining the rise of a stable American culture. For as Schlesinger himself reminds us over and over, in earlier days of relative unity significant portions of the population were not permitted to exercise the very political rights and civic responsibilities that in his own theory serve to "indoctrinate" immigrants in the fundamentals of American culture. On the other hand, the rise of multiculturalism seems to have occurred *pari passu* with the realization of universal access to the ballot box.

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IF SCHLESINGER cannot adequately account for the unique nature of a unifying American identity, he is almost equally incapable of getting at the causes of the present multicultural assault on this identity. He attributes the rise of Afrocentrism, for instance, to a wholly "natural" desire on the part of black Americans "to invoke supposed past glories to compensate for real past and present injustices. Because their exclusion has been more tragic and terrible than that of white immigrants, their quest for self-affirmation is more intense and passionate." While this certainly explains something of the current problem, it does not explain why black Americans' "quest for self-affirmation" must be Afrocentric. Why cannot such a quest be carried out in assimilationist terms, in terms consistent with the tradition of the West and with honor for the majestic founding of this country? In fact, from what we read elsewhere in Schlesinger's book, it clearly can.

> Martin Luther King did pretty well with Thoreau, Ghandi, . . . Reinhold Niebuhr [and Jefferson and Lincoln]. . . . The record hardly shows that "Eurocentric" education had such a terribly damaging effect on the psyche of great black Americans.

Although *The Disuniting of America* explicitly provides the reader with neither a sufficiently profound description of what is uniquely virtuous about American culture nor a satisfactory analysis of the nature of the threat posed by "the cult of ethnicity," taken with other of the author's writings on this subject, the book does explain something. Arthur Schlesinger is the kind of historian commonly known as a cultural relativist. Nor is this a label Schlesinger shuns. Indeed, as he made clear in an otherwise muddled commencement address delivered at Brown University in 1989, he is an unabashed relativist. In that speech, he insisted, among other things, that the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as set forth in the Declaration of Independence is merely a "value," one "of those values [that] seem to us . . . self-evident," to be sure, but a value all the same. Moreover, in concluding *The Disuniting of America,* Schlesinger draws on that Brown speech:

> For our values are not matters of whim and happenstance. History has given them to us. They are anchored in our national experience, in our great national documents, in our national heroes, in our folkways, traditions, and standards. People with a different history will have differing values. But we believe that our own are better for us. They work for us; and for that reason we live and die by them.

We are committed. The problem is that while claiming to remain optimistic, Schlesinger has spent the previous hundred-thirty pages giving us good reason to doubt that we remain collectively committed. Along the way, he has also cooly dispensed with the best reason for maintaining allegiance to our regime.

THE MAIN PROBLEM with *The Disuniting of America,* then, concerns its author's pervasive use of the concept of an "American culture." Schlesinger is unable to see that American is not a culture, not in the conventional relativized sense of promoting "rootedness-in-the-soil." Schlesinger is unable to see this because, as a historicist, he believes that *everything* is a culture. Thankfully, our Founding Fathers were not quite so naive. No matter how much Schlesinger would like to deny the obvious, Jefferson did not speak of values, he spoke of self-evident truths that apply to "all men" and, as Lincoln (another of Schlesinger's relativists!) argued, these truths are what have kept the American polity unified and vigorous:

> I have often inquired of myself, what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy

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> so long together. It was not the mere matter of the separation of the colonies from the mother land; *but something in the Declaration giving liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but hope to the world for all future time* [emphasis added].

Only if the possibility of such universal truths is understood and believed is it possible for us to transcend the friend/enemy distinction that is at the core of multiculturalism.

The real question to explore in reference to the disuniting of America concerns what happens when a significant portion of a society (assisted, as it happens, by intellectuals like Schlesinger) comes radically to doubt the truth of its founding principles. Schlesinger, however, busies himself in effect by declaring that nature's God is dead and then bemoaning the consequences of his declaration. He is limited in his capacity both to diagnose and to treat the current malaise because he is unable to confront the real meaning of a passage that he himself has written in this book:

> People live by their myths, and some may argue that the facts can be justifiably embroidered if embroiderment serves a higher good, such as the nurture of a nation or the elevation of a race. It may seem more important to maintain a beneficial fiction than to keep history pure—especially when there is no such thing as pure history anyway. This may have been what Plato had in mind when he proposed the idea of a noble lie in *The Republic*.

All this is not to suggest that people in South-Central Los Angeles lapsed into barbarism because they had not read enough Jefferson or had consciously rejected the principles of the Declaration. Multiculturalism, as a doctrine, is much more a product of Mr. Quayle's "cultural elite," and particularly those members of the elite making their living in the university. Nevertheless, what goes on in the university is not without consequence; no one who has observed the way in which the most esoteric Continental philosophy has thoroughly infected American popular life can doubt that. Schlesinger does not dispute this in his book. In fact, the documentation of the unhappy influence of such people—for instance, the attempts to establish primary and secondary multicultural curricula—is one of the book's successes. Overall, however, it fails because Schlesinger refuses to understand the true relationship among democracy, relativism, political correctness, and multiculturalism, and is consequently unable to see why in the end America is unusually susceptible to that threatening condition called the "cult of ethnicity."

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BYZANTIUM: THE APOGEE. By JOHN JULIUS NORWICH. *Knopf. 389 pp. $30.*

John Julius Norwich is a good storyteller and Byzantine history is filled with lively tales of palace intrigue, nepotism, treachery, assassinations, arranged marriages, perfidious ambassadors, ambitious generals, sieges of cities and naval battles, and other political, diplomatic, and military events. As Norwich observes, "Happiness and harmony were rare visitors to Byzantium." Unfortunately the narrative is so preoccupied with the foibles of the emperors and the wiles of their advisors that the reader gets little feel for Byzantine society and culture as a whole, and especially for life outside of the city of Constantinople. As for the religion of the Byzantines, it is not a topic that interests Norwich greatly.

—Robert L. Wilken

RELIGION AND THE RISE OF WESTERN CULTURE. By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON. Foreword by Archbishop Rembert Weakland. *Doubleday. 242 pp. $10.*

When Christopher Dawson first published his popular account of medieval society and religion in 1950 he had more than historical questions in mind. His thinking was attuned as much to the ongoing significance of Western culture as to the ideas, events, and institutions of medieval Christian society. In his final chapter he asks: "What have we done with this inheritance?" and answers: "At least we have *had* it. It has been part of our own flesh and blood and the speech of our own tongue." Now forty years later the question is not what we have done with the inheritance, but whether the inheritance is still ours to possess. Like all good books Dawson's *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture* is at once prescient and hopeful and deserving of a careful rereading, or for that matter, a first reading.

—R.L.W.

GUSTAVE WEIGEL: A PIONEER OF REFORM. By PATRICK W. COLLINS. *Liturgical Press. 287 pp. $19.95.*

Father Weigel was an impresario of American Catholic ecumenism in the years before the Second Vatican Council, where he also served as a theological adviser and an aide to Protestant observers. A man of large human sympathies and mordant wit, "Gus," as he was universally known, died in 1964 in mid-Council, and is buried near his great friend, John Courtney Murray, in the Jesuit cemetery that is all that is left of old Woodstock College. This biography was first written as a doctoral thesis almost twenty years ago and still bears the telltale stylistic marks of dissertationitis. Its hermeneutic of Vatican II is firmly locked into the simplicities of the Xavier Rynne school of good guys and bad guys. On the other hand, Father Collins has found interesting connecting threads in what even Father Weigel's close friends regarded as a somewhat frenetic life. An index would have made these connections more readily discernible. In sum, a book to be read for its evocation of a wonderful man and a good priest, rather than for any deep insight into the history of American ecumenism or of the early stages of the Second Vatican Council.

—George Weigel

THE CONSUMING FIRE: A CHRISTIAN INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT. By MICHAEL DUGGAN. *Ignatius Press. 670 pp. $29.95 paper.*

This book is a serviceable introduction to the Old Testament aimed at the average layperson. For the most part the book conveys standard insights culled from the results of modern exegesis. In addition to this there are occasional forays into decidedly Christian readings of the Bible for those portions of the Old Testament that are explicitly picked up by New Testament writers (e.g., the promise to Abraham, Ps. 8, 22, 110). Each section closes with a set of questions for group discussion.

—Gary A. Anderson

A NATION OF VICTIMS: THE DECAY OF THE AMERICAN CHARACTER. By CHARLES J. SYKES. *St. Martin's Press. 288 pp. $22.95.*

This latest book by the author of *ProfScam* details how we Americans have become a nation of whiners, therapy addicts, and, worst of all, plaintiffs in lawsuits. Alas, it is not very deep or original, consisting largely of rehashes of other recent works (*Illiberal Education*, *The Litigation Explosion*) on the same topics. For a funnier, more arresting treatment of Mr. Sykes' themes, read instead Florence King's *With Charity Toward None: A Fond Look at Misanthropy*, also from St. Martin's Press.

—Charlotte Allen

REPARATIVE THERAPY OF MALE HOMOSEXUALITY: A NEW CLINICAL APPROACH. By JOSEPH NICOLOSI. *Aronson (Northvale, N.J.). 355 pp. $40.*

A straightforward and highly readable argument by a psychologist with extensive experience in helping "non-gay homosexuals." It is an important argument that, under pressure from homosexual activists, is unwisely and unfairly excluded from many discussions of these questions today.

RUDE AWAKENINGS: WHAT THE HOMELESS CRISIS TELLS US. By RICHARD W. WHITE, JR. *Institute for Contemporary Studies. 332 pp. $24.95.*

Weary of shrill advocacy in the absence of "solutions," the media turned away from "the problem of the homeless" by the end of 1991. 'Tis a pity. In what may be the very best study of the subject, White explains how a more thoughtful response to the homeless crisis could help heal some of our cultural and political divides.

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The Tragedy of American Compassion. By Marvin Olasky. *Regnery Gateway. 299 pp. $21.95.*

The University of Texas author contends that both government and voluntary associations have today forgotten the wisdom of the "warm hearts and hard heads" of the nineteenth century. The dignity of the poor and the chances of their becoming non-poor, says the author, would be greatly enhanced if "compassion" were joined to communities of sustained caring and spiritual concern. A persuasive argument joined to concrete recommendations for thinking and acting today.

Sports Ethics in America: A Bibliography, 1970-1990. By Donald G. Jones with Elaine L. Daly. Foreword by Thomas H. Kean. *Greenwood Press. 291 pp. $49.95.*

A comprehensive listing of books, articles, and monographs dealing with the larger social significance of sport as a sphere that both reflects and forms character, for better or worse. It covers, among many other subjects, the idea of "play," the cultivation of virtue and the potential corruptions in competition, cheating, violence, big business and sports, gambling, women in sports, and the moral dimensions of physical exertion. A must for all interested in sports ethics, this book will be bought by many libraries and (its hefty price notwithstanding) more than a few individuals.

Further Reflections on the Revolution in France. By Edmund Burke. Edited by Daniel E. Ritchie. *Liberty Fund. 343 pp. $25 cloth, $7.50 paper.*

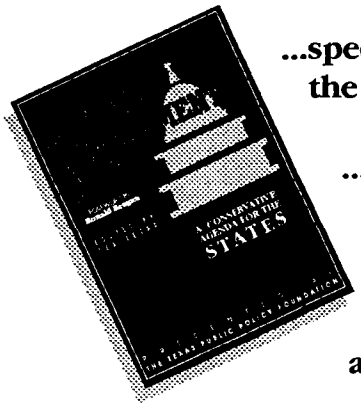
A collection of seven essays that deepen and extend the analysis of Burke's famous *Reflections on the Revolution in France.* A worthwhile and nicely presented volume of interest to students of Burke in particular and of political philosophy in general.

"Be Fertile and Increase, Fill the Earth and Master It": The Ancient and Medieval Career of a Biblical Text. By Jeremy Cohen. *Cornell University Press. 375 pp. $16.95 paper.*

In an exemplary exercise of historical attentiveness, Cohen traces the "career" of Genesis 1:28 through Jewish and Christian sources up to the Reformation period. Although it is not his chief purpose, he decisively debunks the claim that the passage has through the centuries been understood to justify the domination (meaning abuse) of nature.

The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches. By Ernst Troeltsch. Two volumes. *Westminster/John Knox Press. 1,019 pp. $29.95 paper.*

Everyone who works seriously in the field of religion and culture has been influenced greatly, whether directly or indirectly, by Ernst Troeltsch. The *Soziallehren* continues to attract lively intellectual interest, and Westminster renders a signal service by making it once again so readily available.



FOREWORD BY
RONALD REAGAN
Edited by
Tex Lezar

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Richard John Neuhaus

The Public Square

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

A Closed Question And Ecumenism Now

The contention is advanced, with some persuasive force, that the churches lag behind the progress that society has made in recent years with respect to the role of women. In this view, the admission of women to the ordained ministry is a sine qua non of credibility in respecting women's rights. In most of the mainline/oldline churches, as well as in the rabbinate of Reform and Conservative Judaism, that argument has carried the day. Those churches that do not admit women to the ordered ministry are frequently seen as recalcitrant holdouts against the inexorable course of progress. The Roman Catholic Church is, understandably, viewed as the most egregious offender.

The debate over women's ordination is a many-splintered thing, and it will likely continue to splinter groups such as the Anglicans for some time to come. One consideration that has not received the attention it deserves is whether concepts such as "equality" and "rights" mean the same thing in the community of faith as in the civil society. Also frequently obscured is the fact that the ordination of women is very much a minority phenomenon in world Christianity. That is perhaps not surprising in light of the fact that it is largely a phenomenon of the last twenty of Christianity's two thousand years of faith and life.

In any event, the churches to which more than four-fifths of the Christians in the world belong take the position that only men can be admitted to the ordained ministry. In addition to the Roman Catholic Church, these include the Eastern Orthodox churches and the vast array of "evangelical" groups (including fundamentalist, pentecostal, etc.). Moreover, in the Third World, the former mission churches of the oldline denominations are typically very cool to the idea of ordaining women. Of course a question of such moment cannot be decided by head count, but the broader picture helps to keep in perspective the degree to which the insistence on women's ordination is a North American and, to a lesser extent, Western European development.

There is no surprise in the fact that proponents of women's ordination, and especially those women who have been ordained, are determined that their churches not "go back" on the commitment that they have made. From a purely institutional viewpoint, it is hard to see how such churches could retract the decision to ordain women, even if they became persuaded—which seems exceedingly unlikely—that the decision was in error. Consider, for instance, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The predecessor bodies that merged to form the ELCA began ordaining women at the beginning of the 1970s. On other questions about ministry there were sharp disagreements, however, so the merger went ahead with the understanding that the ELCA would try to sort out the doctrine of ministry in its first few years of existence.

A study document has since been issued and among its first stipulations is that there can be no reconsideration of the question of women's ordination. "This study will in no way reopen the question of women's place in the ordained ministry of the church. . . . This explicit affirmation is important, since both women and men have expressed the fear that this study might seek to question women's contribution to the church's ministry." As we said, such an assurance would seem to be institutionally required and, some would argue, morally required in view of the commitment already made to women in ordained ministry.

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Who Closed What?

At a recent conference of mainly Lutheran clergy, a Catholic theologian was challenged on whether Rome has in fact declared women's ordination to be a "closed question." He responded that it was highly improbable that Rome would ordain women, not least because of the hope for reconciliation with the Orthodox churches of the East. But the discussion of women's ordination has not been formally terminated, he said, and it may therefore be argued that it is not a question that has been officially and definitely closed. Turning the challenge around, the Catholic theologian asked whether the Protestant bodies that ordain women have not in fact declared it to be a closed question. The ELCA has answered that question in the affirmative, and other groups that have ordained women would seem to have given the same answer.

Since the Second Vatican Council, the two Western communions in most intensive dialogue with Rome with a believable view toward "ecclesial reconciliation" and "full communion" were the Lutherans and Anglicans. The worldwide Anglican communion is not yet of one mind on ordaining women, but it seems to be moving inexorably toward approval of the practice. As Anglicans on both sides of the question insist, it will be nearly impossible to maintain communion if some bishops do and other bishops do not recognize the orders of women. Of larger significance, as Avery Dulles pointed out in "Ecumenism Without Illusions" (*FT*, June/July 1990), it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the plausibility of the hope for ecclesial reconciliation between Rome and the Lutheran and Anglican communions. Even if Rome were willing, Anglicans and Lutherans would feel that they cannot accept a "mutual recognition of ministries" that excluded the women they have ordained.

The significance of these developments for world Christianity should not be underestimated. Since the beginning of the essentially Protestant ecumenical movement, usually dated from the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910, the goal has been full communion among all Christians. The result has chiefly been the formation of cooperative agencies such as the world and national councils of churches, and the merger of Protestant groups into organizations such as the United Church of Canada and the United Church of Christ, plus the amalgamation of separated groups within denominational traditions such as the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Lutheran. In terms of ecclesial configurations, ecumenism has produced not so much the overcoming of differences as the cobbling together of groups that decided that their differences did not make that much difference.

For many Christians, and especially for many Anglicans and Lutherans, the ecumenical enterprise had a much more ambitious goal than that. They hoped for the ecclesial healing of the breach of the sixteenth century between Rome and the Reformation. Almost nobody today thinks that that is in prospect. Put differently, it becomes an increasingly eschatological prospect. There is irony in the fact that women's ordination—a question that had no part in the disputes of the sixteenth century—may have sealed the permanence of the breach between Rome and the churches that claim the Reformation heritage. On the other hand, it might be argued that women's ordination just happened to be the issue that reflected a much deeper difference implicit in Protestantism's declared freedom from a Christian tradition that Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy deem to be normative. The conclusion that becomes more and more inescapable is that, at the end of the century, the ecumenical enterprise launched in 1910 has turned out to be a noble illusion.

Evangelical Dissent

This comes as no surprise to those evangelical Protestants who have always viewed the ecumenical movement as a dangerous illusion. In their view, that movement and its agencies such as the World Council of Churches (WCC) were from the start exercises in doctrinal compromise and politico-ideological deviance. There is no doubt that the now-fading WCC bears a heavy responsibility for discrediting ecumenism by subordinating the quest for Christian unity to its political and ideological predilections. In the last thirty years the WCC has been more a source of division than of reconciliation in world Christianity. But even if the WCC had kept its politics in check and maintained the priority of the quest for Christian unity, it might not have made much difference to most evangelical Protestants. The reason is that the fiercely independent and congregationally based evangelicals do not generally have a doctrine of "Church" that either requires or accommodates the goal of visible unity understood as ecclesial reconciliation and full communion.

As a consequence of the division over women's ordination—an issue that would seem not to loom large within the context of two millennia of Christian history—we may be forced to a new understanding of the situation of world Christianity. Entering the third millennium, Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy maintain a concept of historical continuity and a doctrine of the Church that makes imperative the quest for

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full communion among all Christians. Mainly because of the fragmented condition of Orthodoxy itself, the healing of the millennium-old breach between Rome and the East will not likely happen any time soon. But both are committed, at least in theory, to that healing as a matter of God's will and therefore of urgent ecclesial duty. In addition, Rome is the more clearly committed to the healing of the later breach with Protestantism, repeatedly declaring that the goal is full communion with all who are, by baptism and faith, now in "true but imperfect" communion with the Catholic Church. Of the approximately 1.7 billion Christians in the world, one billion are Roman Catholic and as many as 200 million are Orthodox.

Outside of Catholicism and Orthodoxy, the largest and most rapidly growing sector of Christianity is that which is broadly designated evangelical Protestant. The concept of the Church held by these Christians, as already noted, makes ecumenism a matter of secondary importance, if indeed it is not viewed as entirely alien to Christian life and mission. In Latin America and elsewhere the explosion of conservative Protestantism has created a situation approximating religious warfare between Catholics and evangelicals. Perhaps not surprisingly, Catholics are sometimes reacting to this conflict in a manner that throws into question their church's formal commitment to ecumenism. Full communion between Catholics and evangelical Protestants is today hardly within the range of discussability. Perhaps the most that can be hoped for as we enter the next century is that Catholics and evangelicals will be able to agree on mutually respectful "rules of engagement" in their continuing rivalry.

Meanwhile, the oldline Protestants seem to be increasingly marginalized in the world-historical picture. There are signs of vitality in the mission churches that they once planted in the Third World, such as the stunning growth of Presbyterianism in South Korea. But the general condition of those churches that sustained the ecumenical movement that is now in ruins is, in North America and Western Europe, one of apparently unremitting decline. As has become evident in the division over women's ordination, although it undoubtedly has deeper causes, the communions that plausibly strove for full communion with Rome and Orthodoxy, notably the Anglicans and the Lutherans, have now apparently accepted their status as permanently separated Protestant denominations. If in fact they are reconciled to that, the goal of ecclesial reconciliation as conceived by the ecumenical movement has been made obsolete.

Toward the Next Century

Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, oldline Protestantism, evangelical Protestantism—these are the four divided components of world Christianity at the edge of the third millennium. (And the last is something of a catch-all, being so disparate that it is perhaps misleading to describe it as one component.) In the present world circumstance it is very difficult to speak believably about the quest for visible Christian unity. Yet the end of one ecumenical movement need not mean the end of ecumenism. Almost all reflective Christians acknowledge that all who are "in Christ" are, however imperfectly, somehow in his body, the Church, for the head cannot be separated from the body. Although lacking any clear idea of how it might happen, almost all can agree that that imperfect unity should be more evident so that the world might see and believe (John 17).

Alexander Schmemann, the late distinguished theologian of the Orthodox Church in America, remarked that Americans will never understand ecumenism because they cannot understand anything that does not have a schedule attached to it. There is, we believe, wisdom in that observation. The better understanding is that ecumenism is integral to Christian existence, and the dissolution of the ecumenical movement launched in 1910 does not change that fact. Depending largely upon Orthodoxy's role in it, even the World Council of Churches could be revived as an instrument of broader Christian cooperation, if not ecclesial reconciliation. We have now neither schedule nor scenario for the future of Christian unity, and perhaps it was presumptuous to think that we ever did. We might also keep in mind that those observers may turn out to be wrong who say that the decision of oldline Protestantism to declare women's ordination a closed question is the end of progress toward full communion. The history of the Christian movement is fraught with surprises.

In the absence of schedules and scenarios, the imperative of Christian unity remains. The maxim of the Faith and Order division of the WCC was "The Unity of the Church, the Unity of Humankind." It is a worthy maxim still. The exclusion of religion from public life is attributable in large part to the wars of religion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Confessional conflicts ripped apart the fabric of civil society. Thoughtful people, including many thoughtful Christians, concluded that Christianity is an inherently divisive force that must be kept at arm's length from the public square. Among the worthy goals of the ecumenical movement was to demonstrate that Christianity could be a source not of division but of unity also in the civil and political order. Whether that claim will be credible

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in the twenty-first century is up to all Christians, but is a most particular responsibility of Roman Catholics and evangelicals.

They are the largest and most assertive sectors of world Christianity. In addition they are, now and in the foreseeable future, the sectors in most widespread conflict. (Conflict between Catholics and Orthodox in Eastern Europe is, we may hope, of a more limited scope.) Finally, the future of the continuing ecumenical imperative rests chiefly upon the Roman Catholic Church. That is because it, unlike evangelical Protestantism, is the bearer of an ecclesiology that makes Christian unity imperative. It was easier for the Catholic Church to work with the Protestant oldline. They at least recognized one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. Many evangelicals, and especially fundamentalists and pentecostalists, are by no means persuaded that Catholics are really Christians. It is tempting for Catholics to return the compliment, but both Catholic orthodoxy and the future of Christian unity forbid it.

In sum, the ecumenical movement that used to be was in many ways an easier thing. It was in large part, among oldline Protestants, a matter of bringing together people who agreed that their differences made little difference. At least with some oldline traditions, it was also able to sustain the hope of healing the breach of the sixteenth century between Rome and the Reformation, until that prospect was closed by, inter alia, the closing of the question of women's ordination. Full ecclesial reconciliation between Orthodoxy and Rome—theologically ever so near and institutionally ever so far—could happen at almost any time, or not for centuries. As the Christian movement is led into its third millennium, ecumenism, far from being passé, may be assuming the form of its most formidable challenge. The challenge is for all Christians, but for nobody so much as for Catholics and evangelicals. In that relationship, there is no doubt a lowering of ecumenical expectations. Full communion is nowhere visible on the horizon. But the development of attitudes and habits of mutual Christian obligation is perhaps ecumenical challenge enough, at least for a time.

FT

Poetry and Prose

The University of California Press does a service by reissuing Thomas Mann's *The Holy Sinner* ($13 paper). When it was first published forty years ago, Mann worried that it was not up to the standard set by his earlier *Doctor Faustus*, and he was undoubtedly right about that. It is nonetheless a fine story finely told (and not to be so psychoanalytically over-interpreted as it is in Russell A. Berman's introduction). But we mention it here for the sake of a comment on poetry that Mann puts in the mouth of his monk narrator: "One thing is certain, that I write prose and not little verses, for which on the whole I cherish no exaggerated regard. Rather in this respect I am in the tradition of the Emperor Carolus, who was not only a great lawgiver and judge of the nations but also the protector of grammar and an assiduous patron of correct and limpid prose. I hear said, indeed, that only meter and rhyme can result in a strict form, but I would like well to know why this hopping on three or four iambic feet, resulting to boot in all sorts of stumbling in dactyls and anapaests, with a little light-hearted assonance of the end words, is supposed to indicate the strict form, as against a shapely prose with its much finer and less obvious rhythmical laws."

If, as Oscar Wilde claimed, Meredith and Browning "used poetry as a medium for writing in prose," it may be said that Mann at his best did the reverse. His narrator's express disdain for formal poetry is widely shared today. Most of the many assertions about poets and poetry ruling the world were made, not surprisingly, by poets. In our time, there is hardly an artistic endeavor more marginal or unrewarded by attention than poetry. Books of poetry are remaindered with unseemly rapidity, if they ever get published in the first place. The number of magazines and journals that publish poetry, even as a literary ruff and frill, even as filler for otherwise awkward white space, continues to decline. While agreeing with Mann on the merits of well-crafted prose, we continue to publish poetry.

Poetry does many things, and not least is aiding our appreciation of fine prose. Poetry is an invitation, almost a demand, to slow down and notice the skillful deployment of words. We are inclined to read a book or an article in order to get the argument, or simply to get through it. We cannot imagine that anybody reads a poem in order to get through it. Well, we can imagine it, but speed-reading poetry seems quite perverse. A poem is a place to stop and linger, and wonder about the arrangement and possible rearrangements of the house of language in which we live. The poem may also give us a salutary

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twitch of guilt about our habit of rushing past the poetry of fine prose. In addition, there are all those thousands of people out there writing it, and some of it is very good, and, if a few of us don't continue to publish it, who will? That having been said, publishing poetry is less our act of charity than gratitude for a gift received. Poets may never rule the world, which is perhaps just as well, but they provide welcome relief from and perspective on its general misrule.

FT

METHODISM ON THE MIDDLE WAY

Every four years the people called Methodist gather in General Conference to discern where now God may be leading the movement launched by John and Charles Wesley in 1729. This year they gathered in Louisville. Not all of Methodism, of course, but the largest part of the movement in this country, the United Methodist Church. With just under nine million members, it is, after the Southern Baptists, the second-largest Protestant association in the United States. Retrospectives from Louisville suggest that the Methodists are sharply divided but not hopelessly split. For the most part, the lines of division track the conservative/liberal divide within the general culture. On the votes deemed to be the most telling, the one thousand elected delegates decided disputes by minuscule majorities, sometimes going one way, sometimes another. On key votes regarding homosexuality and the national bureaucracy, some conservatives claimed victory, while liberals more or less graciously interpreted the same votes as representing little more than a delay of the inevitable. The dynamics of change, they confidently believe, are on their side.

A committee appointed in 1988 recommended that the church change its position that homosexual activity is "incompatible with Christian teaching." The committee majority asked the conference to acknowledge Methodism's "lack of a common mind" on the question, thereby withdrawing any moral censure of homosexual behavior. The conference vote reaffirmed the earlier position but, at the same time, urged local churches to study the committee's report that strongly advocates a change in traditional teaching. Those favoring that change hope that such extensive "education" on the issue will turn the vote in their favor at the General Conference of 1996.

Conservatives took particular satisfaction in a vote favoring a move of the church's largest agency, the General Board of Global Ministries, from New York City. They have long contended that the board, together with other offices of the national church, is out of touch with "grassroots" Methodism in the rest of the country. At the same time, the conference mandated further study of the costs of such a relocation, thus effectively delaying a final decision on the move until 1996. The hegemony of ambivalence was evident in other issues. On the national church budget, for example, officials asked for a 4 percent annual increase from local churches. After much wrangling, the general conference approved a 2.4 percent annual increase.

At Louisville there were signs of greater concern for the protection of the unborn, but an earlier resolution backing the *Roe v. Wade* decision and existing patterns of cooperation with pro-abortion organizations were allowed to stand. A new "Book of Worship" maintains the Trinitarian language of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for rites such as baptism and ordination, but also includes "gender inclusive" language aimed at accenting the "feminist dimensions" of God. And so there are prayers addressed to "our Mother and Father," and referring to God as "bakerwoman" leavening our hopes and giving "birth to our world."

Diversity Within Limits

Tex Sample, professor of ethics at St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, explained the Methodist situation: "This is a centrist church. The delegates want diversity, as much inclusion of people as they can possibly get, as long as they don't have to buy into a position they think is divisive." That rather neatly summarizes the circumstance in which other mainline/oldline churches find themselves. And of course the description applies beyond the boundaries of oldline Protestantism. The goal is to be as inclusive and diverse as possible, but that is not the highest goal. Institutional stability, which requires the avoidance of "divisiveness," is trump. Methodism, like other oldline groups, has been in an institutional free fall for many years now. Those on all sides of disputed questions are concerned, if not alarmed, by that reality, and are therefore reluctant to push their causes to the point where they might further debilitate the institution that they wish to win over to their side.

Sample's formula of "diversity just short of divisiveness" works in favor of the liberal faction that dominates also the national bureaucracies. Whether the issue is homosexuality, feminism, or multiculturalism, the assumption is that the

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"progressive" causes are on the offensive. The church may not be "ready" to embrace them now, but through a sustained process of "education" popular resistance can be overcome. The initiative is with change toward the new. Most important, the rubric of inclusiveness means that all viewpoints must be represented, and those minority viewpoints that have been least heard in the past must be more than equally represented.

The loser in this process, of course, is the question of truth. When inclusiveness reigns, those who appeal to the Bible or to the classical Christian tradition or to the Wesleyan heritage are representing simply one viewpoint among others. To the traditionalists this is intolerable, since it means that truth and falsehood are equally represented in the church's decision making. But their unhappiness with this situation, indeed their insistence that there is a distinction between truth and falsehood, registers in the process as no more than one more opinion to be included in an outcome that aims at accommodating maximum diversity short of institutional divisiveness. The entire process becomes one of accommodating opinions and passions rather than of weighing arguments. Thus does the procedural triumph over the deliberative in an approach that is always pressing the envelope to be more inclusive. Thus does the "middle" get moved inexorably toward that which had previously been inadmissible.

There are some understandable, and in many ways attractive, human dimensions that accelerate this process. For instance, William D. Lux, an Iowa farmer who sat on the homosexuality committee, described his feelings when a colleague on the panel told him she was a lesbian "in a committed couple relationship." Mr. Lux told the delegates that he continued to believe that the Bible prohibited homosexual activity, "But, at the same time, within this committee we have built a level of trust and understanding where we can speak to each other under the umbrella of Jesus Christ." The image of Jesus Christ as an umbrella is reminiscent of the late Lee Atwater's description of the Republican Party as a "big tent" that can accommodate pro-choice and pro-life viewpoints. It is an image that well serves the mandate to be inclusive. Whatever the Bible and the Wesleyan tradition may say about sexual ethics, Mr. Lux and many like him are understanding, compassionate, and just plain nice people who are not about to pass severe judgment on the practices or views of others whom they have come to like. The Christian imperative, after all, is to be "accepting." Isn't that what the New Testament means by love? (It isn't, of course, but the equation of love and niceness is far advanced in our culture and in our churches.)

Ensuring Apostasy

Some of the dynamics at work here were well understood by Alexander Pope more than two centuries ago. "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,/As to be hated needs but to be seen;/Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,/We first endure, then pity, then embrace." Three steps: to endure, to pity, to embrace. To endure is not to judge and certainly not to exclude. To pity is to be understanding and compassionate. To embrace is to officially approve, perhaps at the 1996 General Conference after the constituency has been sufficiently "educated."

"Diversity just short of divisiveness" is a formula tailor-made to ensure apostasy. At its heart is the ascendancy of sociological and institutional principles of representation over theological principles of deliberation. At its heart is the relativizing and eviscerating of the question of the truth. Again, the problem is in no way limited to Methodism. There is hardly a religious community in America that has not succumbed to the imperative of inclusiveness, sometimes employing elaborate quota systems to ensure that the enemies of the tradition have at least equal representation with its defenders. But all such communities were originally constituted by a claim to truth, and cannot long survive the abandonment of that claim.

The defenders of the constituting truth claims are regularly, and successfully, portrayed as reactionaries resisting the inevitable course of progress. In the struggle between liberals and conservatives, each accuses the other of cultural accommodationism. Conservatives, it is said, are uncritically captive to the church culture of the past, while they accuse liberals of joining the Gadarene rush to accommodate the church to the secular culture of the present. But this again is a sociological rather than a theological dispute. It is doubtful that most of our churches are still capable of theological argument. Such an argument assumes that there is indeed a word from God, that there is normative truth by which the life of the Christian community is to be ordered, if it is to be a *Christian* community. That very assumption is deemed to represent a conservative bias. Under the rubric of inclusiveness, it will be admitted to the debate, but it will be counted as one viewpoint among others. When the appeal to normative truth is registered as a viewpoint to be taken into account, the appeal to normative truth is denied.

Conservatives and moderates came away from Louisville feeling that they had gained some ground. If, however, "diversity just short of divisiveness" is the controlling dynamic, they have only slowed the loss of ground. Their resistance demonstrated to their opponents who do not want

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to destroy the institution that the institution of United Methodism is more fragile than the party of progress had hoped. The progressives will have to go more slowly in educating the constituency to embrace their agenda of change. In Methodism and in all the churches, those who are loyal to constituting traditions will have to do much better than what apparently happened in Louisville. They will have to demonstrate how traditions that brought communities into being can faithfully develop in response to new challenges. They will have to make a persuasive case that truth is not the enemy but the indispensable support of other great goods, such as compassion and understanding. Absent the capacity to deliberate about theological truth, religious communities are defenseless before the ravages of sociological transformation disguised as progress. It is not easy to make the case for truth in a culture whose intellectual elites (very active also in the several churches) have come to believe that Pilate's question to Jesus—What is truth?—represents philosophical sophistication.

FT

ABORTION ABOLITIONISM

The pro-life movement is not all that new, writes Marvin Olasky of the University of Texas in *Policy Review.* Abortion was widespread in the nineteenth century, and many groups opposed it chiefly by providing caring alternatives. The YWCA, Women's Christian Temperance Union, and a host of denominational groups, joined by the medical establishment, not only made clear that abortion is a great vice but they developed myriad programs aimed at helping women in various circumstances, including girls unaccustomed to "city ways" and prostitutes. By the 1870s, all states had laws making almost all abortions illegal and, although they were fitfully implemented, they placed an effective moral onus on the practice. Looking at the larger picture, Olasky observes that "the 1950s was probably the safest time to be conceived in American history."

Although many pro-lifers today are inclined to compare their cause with the abolitionist movement of the last century, Olasky urges that the incremental approach of that earlier pro-life effort is a more promising example to follow. "Men such as John Brown," he notes, "helped to precipitate a tragic civil war in which 600,000 died, and former slaves found their new freedom abridged by sharecropping, lynching, and the Ku Klux Klan." Drawing on a more recent analogy, he suggests that the policy of "containment" has been vindicated in dealing with Communism, and a comparable policy is in order in reducing drastically the number of abortions.

"Proponents of containment did not have it easy. Some Americans criticized the approach because it did not kill Communism immediately. Some demanded military action and argued that it was immoral to leave hundreds of millions of souls in totalitarian hell while life went on in America. Containment doctrine was embraced by Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower and maintained by the United States, despite some wavering in the 1970s, for forty years. Now that the West has won, all of us can see how immoral it would have been to resort to war for a slim chance to achieve ends, at enormous cost, that were attainable through peaceful perseverance.

"The pro-life movement today needs Eisenhowers, not John Browns. It needs leaders who understand that, in America, there has always been some abortion among women seduced and abandoned by men, money, or the religion of self. That is sad, but the tragedy becomes gargantuan only when those three groups expand to become part of an evil empire, and when those on the outskirts of the group come to consider abortion normal. The pro-life goal should be to help Americans see abortion not as a right but as a non-normative practice engaged in by sidestream groups and not given societal approval. As abortion is contained in that way, legal changes and compassionate alternatives will reduce the likelihood of abortion being used as a desperate recourse.

"The hope with containment, of course, is that it is the first step to rollback. Who would have dreamed that the Soviet empire, after decades of constant pressure, would finally fall so fast? But it did. And that is why a doctrine of perseverance is not depressing for those who have a biblically realistic view of human nature and a trust in God's timing and justice. The abortion empire can begin to fall only if it faces steady pressure over decades through all the means that worked a century ago and are beginning to work anew: education about abstinence, refuges for the abandoned, and provision for adoption and many other services."

Olasky's article is part of a forthcoming book, *Abortion Rites: A History of Abortion in America,* to which we will be giving attention in these pages. There is undoubted wisdom in the argument that he and others make for an incremental approach of containment (see "Abortion: The Case for Political Compromise" by Christopher Wolfe, *FT,* June/July.) Certainly there will always be abortions, just as many human beings will persist in other vicious

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behavior. The incidence of abortion can be dramatically reduced, not least of all by the pedagogical effect of restoring laws that are clearly biased in favor of life. At the same time, not all pro-lifers will be persuaded by the argument for incremental change and containment, and that may be just as well. Causes that engage questions of great moral moment are seldom univocal. However ambiguously, the abolitionists did contribute to abolition, and proponents of "rolling back" Communism stiffened the spines of those who pursued containment. Quite apart from the strategic merits or demerits of having "extremists" in the pro-life movement, they are not going to go away. Americans who believe that four thousand pre-born children are being murdered each day in this country are understandably impatient with nuanced strategies for ending that horror. A truly nuanced strategy will take that impatience constructively into account.

FT

Purifications

In the aftermath of Communism, the former captive nations may be sliding into a new captivity to vindictiveness and revenge. Especially in Poland and Czechoslovakia there is intense agitation to "purify" politics and public life of those who collaborated with the former regimes. Many observers and participants are reminded of the efforts to "de-Nazify" Germany after World War II. There are important dissimilarities, however. The Communist dictatorships in Central Europe lasted almost four times as long as Nazism. Living under Communism was a way of life for several generations, and it is exceedingly difficult to distinguish active collaborators from those who just "went along" under the pressures to conform. In addition, the end of Nazism came about almost entirely by a victory from without, whereas the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia and developments generated by Solidarity and the church in Poland were largely internal to these societies. After the War, the Nuremberg trials and other de-Nazification procedures were conducted under the secure hegemony of the conquering allies. There is no comparable supervisory authority in the post-Communist societies.

The debate over political purification and the screening out of collaborators raises important questions about history, complicity, forgiveness, reconciliation, and the limits of human justice. One observer writes: "In Czechoslovakia and elsewhere in the Eastern bloc, it is the former dissidents and those who spent the most time in prison who generally oppose the 'screening' law. On the other hand, it is fast being revealed that some of the most rabid new-style anti-Communists have a history of, if not collaboration, then cozy relations with the discredited regimes." The poet and former president of Czechoslovakia, Václav Havel, who more than paid his dues as a dissident, opposes the passion for purgation. In perhaps his best book, *Living in Truth*, Havel underscores the critical importance of calling good and evil by name. It is one thing to recognize the good and evil that confront us in the present, but quite another to try to calibrate gradations of participation in good and evil by millions of people over a span of more than forty years. It is one thing to exclude from political life those who were clearly in charge of the hated regime, but quite another to punish those who were less than heroic in making their peace with an oppression that they viewed as unassailable.

Milos Zeman is one of those who participated in the peaceful demonstrations of October 1989 that produced the Velvet Revolution. Although we may remember images of hundreds of thousands of people on the streets, Zeman reminds us that at the beginning only a few hundred people joined the protest. And those few hundred did not include most of those who are now so eager to conduct a purge. He recently spoke to the national assembly in a debate over the screening law: "I ask, who in this assembly was there and whether a complex of guilt, a complex of collaboration, is not driving some of those who are frantically applauding." As in the Great Terror of the French Revolution, those who most vociferously cry for retribution may be hoping to deflect attention from their own complicity in the crimes that they very belatedly came to condemn.

Obviously, these societies will have to sort out for themselves the problematic legacy of their recent past. Just as obviously, they cannot adopt a morally indifferent attitude of "forgive and forget" without corrupting even more deeply their common life. "Living in truth" means that truth must be told about the great lessons to be drawn from the horror through which they came. It does not mean a retributive justice that relentlessly seeks to allocate blame with individual precision. The attempt to do that could unleash suspicions, recriminations, and police controls not unlike the former horror. It is not surprising that the real dissidents, the heroes of the great drama of these last years, dissent from the passion for purgation indulged by those who were less than heroes, who were frequently cowards, and sometimes criminals.

That the guilty should be punished is a sound

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general proposition. That the most manifestly guilty should be punished is necessary public policy. That an entire population be put on trial for their complicity in crimes past is beyond the capacity of human justice and a sure formula for new, and possibly greater, crimes in the future. "Living in truth" is living in the acknowledgment of ambiguity and the possibility of forgiveness. Forgiveness, in this context, is less solution than solvent. It is not a satisfactory solution but, in the absence of solutions, it is the necessary solvent of a problem of retribution that cannot be resolved within the limits of sinful human nature.

FT

A SYNTHESIS TOO SMOOTH

In a careful reflection titled "Should the Church Help Shape Public Policy?", Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk of Cincinnati, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, emphatically and rightly answers the title question in the affirmative. One part of his argument, however, gives reason for pause. He discusses the need to translate religious language into language appropriate to the public square and remarks that the "common ground" on which church and civil society carry out their proper activity "is the idea of the dignity of the human person." "The church accounts for the dignity of the human person on religious grounds," the Archbishop writes, "grounds concerned with creation and redemption and an eternal destiny. Society takes the dignity of the human person as a given, as something beyond further determination by human means. But the reality is the same."

What the civil society means by "freedom" is what Christians mean by "human dignity," and vice versa. He makes the point even more strongly: "A good rule of thumb for translating religious discourse into civil terminology is to read 'freedom' wherever the religious context speaks of 'human dignity.' Likewise, if you want to read civil discourse from a religious perspective, read 'human dignity' for 'freedom' throughout." If one reads our civil discourse from, for example, the Declaration of Independence, the smooth synthesis suggested by the Archbishop has a measure of plausibility. But surely that is not what is meant by "freedom" in either elite or popular culture today. The Christian understanding of the dignity of the human person—derived from God, directed to God, and embedded in communities of virtue—is quite the opposite of freedom understood as license, as freedom *from* all that constrains the actualization of the self-constructed self. The latter understanding of freedom, the freedom of the unencumbered self, is now entrenched also in the doctrine expounded by the Supreme Court.

Archbishop Pilarczyk's essay helps us understand the ways in which Christians necessarily live within two traditions of discourse. In other contexts he has spoken persuasively about the countercultural character of Christian faith and life. The present essay would be strengthened by that theme, recognizing the ways in which the two discourses do not always neatly converge in American society, but are and must be also in tension, and frequently in conflict. The two discourses are not simply saying the same thing in different ways. The vitality of the Christian community, and of the civil society, requires a clear acknowledgment of clear differences. It is only when the differences that really make a difference are candidly engaged that the democratic process is tested. Indeed, it is for the sake of that open-ended testing that our constitutional order was invented.

FT

MAKING BABIES AND MAKING BABIES WANTED

The *New York Times Magazine* carries a devastating article on abuses and tragedies surrounding IVF (In Vitro Fertilization) and related technologies aimed at "making babies." Ellen Hopkins writes in "Tales From the Baby Factory" that numerous couples have been seduced into trying one technique after another—at enormous financial and emotional expense—with only a very, very few ever ending up with a baby of their own. She concludes: "Ours is a society driven by the technological imperative. If the technology exists, we use it. The rare cancer patient who refuses treatment bewilders us—however debilitating that treatment may be, however low its success rate. 'If there's just the tiniest chance' is today's refrain when confronted by therapy for a body that won't cooperate. Obviously, reproductive technology has blessed many couples with unfathomable joy. Obviously, even the harshest critics of IVF don't want to run back the clock to the bad old days when the only option offered the childless was stoic acceptance. What isn't so obvious—and what needs to be addressed—is the fact that in the realm of fertility options,

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more doesn't always mean better. Babies have price tags. The currency differs according to the circumstances. Sometimes the cost is measured in monetary terms, sometimes physical or emotional, sometimes spiritual. But every bundle of joy has its price. And while it's unfashionable to state this in the midst of today's fervid baby worship, that price may be more than some of us can afford."

At the time the Hopkins article appeared, other reports on abuses of IVF were receiving widespread attention, including that of a Virginia "fertility doctor" who employed the distinctly low-tech approach of impregnating 60 or 70 women with his own semen. The sadness of the preoccupation with artificial reproduction techniques is magnified because it has succeeded in drawing attention away from the many children who desperately need adoption. For reliable information on adoption, which in fact has brought joy to countless parents, write the National Committee on Adoption, 1930 Seventeenth Street NW, Washington D.C. 20009.

FT

The Higher Racism

When it comes to race, black is white and white is black, if that is what it takes to keep the p.c. focus on white guilt for the oppression of blacks. Thus *Newsweek*, the pop opinion magazine, offers a sympathetic survey of black rap "artists." While on the surface it may seem that the rappers indulge in morally debased celebrations of violence, cop killing, and gangbanging (multiple rape), the more sophisticated will recognize that they are actually appealing to "conservative values." A new disc from a group called Arrested Development, *Newsweek* notes approvingly, "replaces rage with measured calls to arms." The suggestion is that the advocacy of measured murder is a definite improvement. Another outfit, Kriss Kross, has a new number lauding gunplay and the excitements of shooting people you don't like. They are described as a "Kid duo with an edge." A young man called Scarface of the Geto [sic] Boys raps, "Dad said, always look a man in the eye before you kill him." This, *Newsweek* acknowledges, is "the new hard line."

Not to worry, however. "Beneath the sometimes harsh imagery, rap embraces very old-fashioned social norms (even, in its take on gender roles and homosexuality, primitive norms)." Ten guys brutally sodomizing a young girl before shooting her dead, or young toughs hunting "faggots" in order to force them to do grotesquely rude things is, *Newsweek* admits, "primitive." But then, the reader is implicitly reminded with a wink and a nudge, "You know how those colored folk are." Anyway, hating women and homosexuals are "old-fashioned social norms" that most Americans presumably subscribe to, albeit with somewhat more reserve. Further, we must respect the violent rappers for their economic enterprise. They are making very big bucks. *Newsweek* approvingly quotes an authority on the subject who asks, "Isn't that the self-sufficiency that Thomas Sowell and Clarence Thomas and Bush prescribe?"

The celebrated head of Afro-American studies at Princeton, Cornel West, concedes that a lot of rap "sounds bad." But then we have to understand that these kids have had a rough time in life. "Look at the job the mamas and the daddies have done," observes West. *Newsweek* concludes that rap has rendered a great social service by warning us about the "rage" that is building up and sometimes explodes, as in Los Angeles last April. While celebrating gangbangers, dead police, and civil war, "the music also held to other values: nurturing, education, self-sufficiency." "These are some of the forces that must come together to rebuild the country. However modestly, rap has hinted at a way to that regeneration, too." Why sure, why didn't we think of that? The next time you feel a negative thought coming on about thugs who rape, mug, and butcher the innocent, just remind yourself that they are only hinting at a way to the regeneration of America. Now if there were only some slight hint of regeneration among the editors of *Newsweek* who cannot bring themselves to treat blacks as full participants in a society that has run out of patience with the racist claim that blacks are childish primitives for whom allowances must be made.

FT

The Sider Crusade

Back in 1973 there was a Chicago Declaration calling evangelical Protestants to greater social and political engagement. Ron Sider, now of Eastern Seminary, was key to that, as he had also been the point man a year earlier for Evangelicals for McGovern. Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* has sold over 200,000 copies in three editions. The editors of *Christianity Today* recently made Sider and his "Unsettling Crusade" the subject of a cover story. It is generally admiring, while admitting that Sider's analysis of

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the causes of world hunger "is not particularly convincing." More generally, they observe that "Sider clearly, if simplistically, presents the liberal side of this debate." Nonetheless, "Through twenty years of perpetual motion, he has helped to keep world poverty on evangelicals' consciences." Sider himself acknowledges that he has become more "conservative" in some respects. He now recognizes, for instance, that failures in personal ethics can do as much damage to people as failures in political ethics.

The article emphasizes that Ron Sider has a way of irritating everyone across the political spectrum, being much too cautious for left-wing publications such as *Sojourners* and too radical for almost all the activists of the Christian right. For our part, we have always found Sider a likable fellow, irritating only in his ebullient certitude that, if we all loved Jesus enough and had the political will for it, we could fix most anything wrong with the world. It is not so much that he lacks a sense of the tragic. He lacks a sense of the difficult. *CT* may be right in saying that his agitations have helped keep world poverty, and much else, on the Christian conscience. But his simplistic nostrums for redistributing the wealth have also seduced gullible Christians, while leading the more thoughtful to the unhappy conclusion that Christian concern for poverty is inherently muddleheaded. And on the great test of political morality in our time—clearly discerning the difference between the free society and Communist totalitarianism—Ron Sider struck out again and again.

That being said, however, Sider continues to be part of the yeast and salt in American Christianity, and especially in evangelical Protestantism. His enthusiasm can take the form of insufferably obtuse self-righteousness, but also of unflagging eagerness to engage and convert those with whom he disagrees. In the engagement he, too, is changed, at least a little. Unlike those who are called neoconservatives, he seems to be impervious to muggings by reality. Through all its contortions and transmogrifications, Sider stubbornly holds on to what he believes to be the liberal faith. He describes himself as a country hick who got to go to Yale where his best friends were "Wheaton sophisticates." Anyone who came of intellectual age viewing Wheaton College as the lodestar of sophistication is likely to carry through life a somewhat peculiar view of how the world works. Notwithstanding, anyone who reads this comment as anything other than an affectionate tribute to the ever-exasperating Ronald Sider has misread it.

FT

WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ Doubleday renders a fine service by reissuing three classic works by John Henry Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Doctrine, Letter to the Duke of Norfolk,* and *Essay on Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine,* all collected in a volume titled *Conscience, Consensus, and the Development of Doctrine* (464 pp., $15). Doubleday is responsible for a great disservice in giving the collection the subtitle "Revolutionary Texts by Cardinal Newman," along with dustjacket hype about Newman being a great champion of "change" and "conscience" in the sense that those terms are understood by the religious libertines of our day, and of his. Fortunately, the introduction by editor James Gaffney, as well as the Newman texts themselves, give the lie to the publisher's misleading promotion. Conscience, for Newman, was not a matter of self-will or self-expression but of obedience to God as best one can discern the will of God. Here is a passage with a fine contemporary ring, as pertinent to 1992 as to 1874, in which Newman, drawing upon both Protestant and Catholic authorities, contrasts two dramatically different understandings of what is meant by conscience: "When men advocate the rights of conscience, they in no sense mean the rights of the Creator, nor the duty to Him, in thought and deed, of the creature; but the right of thinking, speaking, writing, and acting, according to their judgment or their humor, without any thought of God at all. They do not even pretend to go by any moral rule, but they demand what they think is an Englishman's prerogative, for each to be his own master in all things, and to profess what he pleases, asking no one's leave, and accounting priest or preacher, speaker or writer unutterably impertinent, who dares to say a word against his going to perdition, if he like it, in his own way. Conscience has rights because it has duties; but in this age, with a large portion of the public, it is the very right and freedom of conscience to dispense with conscience, to ignore a Lawgiver and Judge, to be independent of unseen obligations. It becomes a license to take up any or no religion, to take up this or that and let it go again, to go to church, to go to chapel, to boast of being above all religions and to be an impartial critic of each of them. Conscience is a stern monitor, but in this century it has been superseded by a counterfeit, which the eighteen centuries prior to it never heard of, and could not have mistaken for it, if they had. It is the right of self-will."

■ This is something we had meant to comment on some time back. Maurice M. Benitez of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas addressed the Church

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Club of New York, and in the course of his remarks he rehearsed the gloomy statistics relative to the decline of the Episcopal Church. The church, he suggests, has lost its way, theologically, morally, spiritually. He illustrates the point with this story: "Ten years ago I was on the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, and we passed a resolution, over the objections of a few of us, condemning Exxon for diversification. Instead of lowering gasoline prices, they had invested some of their profits in buying a company that was developing a new electric motor. The Executive Council said that was wrong and so passed a resolution, refusing to wait for the next meeting when a spokesman for Exxon could be present. We discovered two days later that it wasn't Exxon at all, it was Mobil." The conclusion to be drawn? Maybe this, said Bishop Benitez: "Our task in the world is to build congregations that embody the principles of our faith. Rather than a never-ending stream of resolutions about justice, let's demonstrate justice in our care for one another, in the way that we live. Rather than sending pronouncements to Congress to do right, we are called to build up a people of righteousness in our congregations. The Church serves the world best and has the most profound effect on society by being the Church."

■ The more things change, and so forth. Here is a 1791 letter from Burke to the Chevalier de Rivarol. Change "humanity" and "benevolence" to "compassion" and "sensitivity," and see how it fits the world of the morally correct 201 years later: "I have observed that the philosophers in order to insinuate their polluted atheism into young minds systematically flatter all their passions natural and unnatural. They explode or render odious or contemptible that class of virtues which restrain the appetite. These are at least nine out of ten of the virtues. In place of all this, they substitute a virtue which they call humanity or benevolence. But this means their morality has no idea in it of restraint, or indeed of a distinct settled principle of any kind. When their disciples are thus left free and guided only by present feeling they are no longer to be depended on for good or evil. The men who today snatch the worst criminal from justice will murder the most innocent persons tomorrow."

■ The Millennium Society is composed of 6,000 young and rich business types who say they are going to throw the biggest party in history on December 31, 1999. Some 2,000 members plan to travel to Egypt aboard the Queen Elizabeth II to celebrate the year 2000 at the Great Pyramid of Cheops. Other parties will be thrown at Stonehenge, Red Square, and the Taj Mahal. Apparently the group is not big on arithmetic. The third millennium begins January 1, 2001. More interestingly, they seem quite oblivious to the event that got civilization measuring time this way in the first place. No party is planned at Bethlehem.

■ "Marketplace Prophets" is a film promoting the American bishops' Campaign for Human Development. It has been shown on network television and is available for study groups. The theme is "voices for justice in the twentieth century," and the heroes and heroines are the wonderfully radical activists of NETWORK who work for overhauling the oppressive economic structures of the West. They are following the teachings of a Church that "used to be focused on the hereafter" but has now joined recent popes in "turning to issues of this world." The great news is that "the popes no longer reject socialism," and they call us to reject the conservatism of market economies. We hope that somebody is collecting items such as "Marketplace Prophets" for a much needed museum of religio-ideological antiquities.

■ Dr. George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, has refused an invitation to be patron of the Anglican Church's Ministry Among Jews (CMJ). Some Jewish organizations have hailed it as a great step forward in Jewish-Christian relations. One may be permitted to doubt it. The Archbishop said, "Alongside my commitment to mission stands another commitment. It is to do all in my power to encourage trust and friendship between the different faith communities in our land." Canterbury, he says, "is looked to as the protector of the religious freedom of people of other faiths and as a genuine friend." He observes that "rightly or wrongly, many Jewish people do not believe that CMJ respects their integrity." It is hard to see how Carey's decision has anything to do with religious freedom, and, if some Jews "wrongly" think that CMJ offends their integrity, it would seem to be all the more reason for the Archbishop to come to the organization's defense. Perhaps CMJ is theologically off base or employs illegitimate means in pursuit of its mission. Those would be good reasons for his refusing to serve as a patron. But the Archbishop doesn't say that. He simply says that many Jews resent any effort to share the Gospel with Jews. The effort gets in the way of "trust and friendship" between Jews and Christians. But trust and friendship that is based upon obscuring the most fundamental point of difference between Christians and Jews is a fragile artifice. It seems that the Archbishop's "commitment to mission" is sharply qualified by the condition that mission not give offense. The reason he gives for distancing himself from CMJ debases the theological integrity of the Jewish-Christian relationship—a relationship forged not

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by evasion but by engagement and respectful argument. Moreover, his remarks give further reason for disappointment among those who had hoped that Dr. Carey would provide a clear evangelical leadership that might stir to renewal the moribund Church of England.

■ We see from *L'Osservatore Romano* that the Holy See and Mongolia have decided to establish diplomatic relations. The rumor is that both *The Wanderer* and the *National Catholic Reporter* have submitted to Rome the names of a number of U.S. prelates who would be ideal for the post of Apostolic Nuncio to Mongolia. Different names, of course.

Sources: Quotes on United Methodism, *New York Times*, May 17, 1992. Marvin Olasky on the pro-life movement in *Policy Review*, Spring 1992. Milos Zeman on retribution in "The Velvet Revolution Gets Rough," *New York Times Magazine*, May 31, 1992. Archbishop Pilarczyk on the Church and public policy in *Origins*, June 11, 1992. Ellen Hopkins on in vitro fertilization, *New York Times Magazine*, March 15, 1992. On rap music, *Newsweek*, June 29, 1992. On Ron Sider, *Christianity Today*, April 27, 1992. Edmund Burke quotation submitted by John Attarian. On the Millennium Society, *New York Times*, September 1, 1991. Archbishop Carey on proselytizing among the Jews from American Jewish Committee news release, March 13, 1992.

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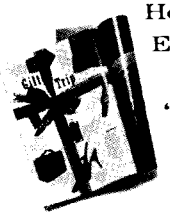

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